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When the Olympics came to our farm page 12

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56th year of publication

Anglican Church of Canada and Evangelical Lutherans enter into joint ministry

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COURTESY CANADA LUTHERAN

ELCIC National Bishop Telmor Sartison (centre) and Canadian Anglican Archbishop Michael Peers (right) sign the Waterloo Declaration, bringing the two denominations into full communion.

Harry der Nederlanden (with files from Leanne Larmondin, Website Manager of the ACC)

WATERLOO, Ontario — The Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) have ratified an agreement that brings the two denominations into full communion.

The two denominations held simultaneous assemblies in Waterloo, Ontario: the triennial general synod of the Anglican Church of Canada met from July 4 to 11, and the biennial convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada met from July 4 to 8.

Virtually unanimous

The 365 Lutheran delegates gathered at Wilfrid Laurier University and 350 Anglican delegates meeting at the nearby University of Waterloo gave virtually unanimous support to the Waterloo

Declaration, an agreement which brought the two church bodies into full communion.

While the two Canadian churches remain distinct bodies with independent denominational structures, they agree to recognize each other's ordinations, to permit clergy of each denomination to preside at services of the other and to engage in broad co-operative mission work.

Similar move in U.S.

Earlier this year, the Episcopal (Anglican) Church in the United States and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America also inaugurated full communion.

The ACC has about 750,000 members in 1,850 parishes and 30 dioceses across Canada; there are about 2,000 active clergy. The ELCIC has about 200,000 baptized members in 642 congregations with about 650 clergy.

In an interview with ENI,

ELCIC National Bishop Telmor Sartison stressed that the Waterloo Declaration was not a merger. He said that each church "maintains its own autonomy while recognizing the catholicity and apostolicity of the other, and believing the other to hold the essentials of the Christian faith."

"The major significance of this event is the manifestation of what the Spirit is trying to do with the church today," Bishop Sartison said. "Bringing us together, not in a unity of organization, but in a unity of spirit and mission: who knows where that will lead?"

The Waterloo Declaration deepens a relationship that already existed between the two church bodies. "In 1989, we said we can commune at one another's table — the major expansion has been the recognition of one another's ministries," Bishop Sartison said.

The Anglican Synod also dealt

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Pope's trips to Greece, Ukraine bring mixed results

Alan Doerksen

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Although Pope John Paul II's recent trips to Ukraine and Greece have historical significance, they may also have deepened a rift between the Roman Catholic and Russian Orthodox churches, according to two Christian professors.

The Pope has been trying to build bridges between Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches, but going to Ukraine against the wishes of Russian Orthodox Moscow Patriarch Alexy II could only increase strained relationships with that church, says George Vandervelde, who teaches Systematic Theology at the Institute for Christian Studies, in

Toronto. "It will only compound the problem," he asserts. "It's a question of diplomacy."

Pope strong on ecumenism

Although the Pope has been "very strong" on ecumenism with the Eastern Orthodox churches, a papal visit to Moscow could now be "out of the picture," says Vandervelde.

Even though the Pope visited Ukraine, not Russia, Alexy II is the leader of 9,000 Orthodox religious communities in Ukraine, according to the *Globe and Mail*. "The Orthodox have a strong sense of canonical territory," observes Vandervelde.

In Greece, "the situation is comparable," he adds. "The Greek

Orthodox Church claims the Greek territory is theirs."

The Pope's visits to Ukraine and Greece have been "part of a pattern of wanting to visit the world's churches," says Vandervelde — something he expects the Pope to continue.

Several years ago, Vandervelde had an opportunity to meet with the Pope to discuss how the papal office is seen by other churches. Vandervelde met with him in his role as co-chair of the World Evangelical Fellowship/Roman Catholic Consultation.

The Pope traveled to Ukraine in late June with three major objectives, according to Catholic News Service (CNS): encouraging a

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G. GIANSANTI-SYGMA/PUBLIPHOTO

Pope John Paul II has been reaching out to the Greek and Russian Orthodox communities.

News

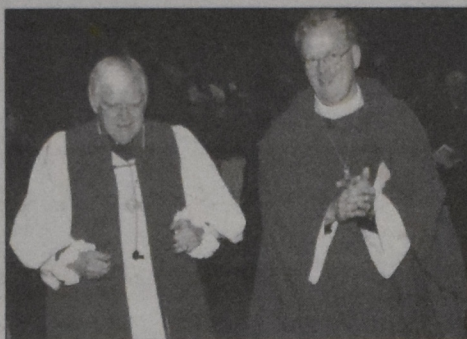
Native Anglican Bishop forgives church

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at length with the aboriginal issue, including the bad news that the national office as well as more than one-quarter of the church's 30 diocesan governments may be bankrupt by next year. The church has spent almost \$5 million on legal fees defending itself against nearly 1,200 lawsuits resulting from its administration of 26 residential schools on behalf of the Canadian government. About one-third of the cases come from the government itself naming the church as a third party.

'A shining model'

Yet, Bishop Steven Charleston, dean of Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass., and himself part Cherokee, delivered an upbeat opening message: "Anglicans in Canada serve as a shining model for churches throughout the world," he said. "Canadian Anglicans are not turning away from their own past, but are courageous enough to face up to the unpleasant realities of past colonial wrongs. This church is behaving with both



Bishop Sartison and Archbishop Peers dance in celebration at the end of the formal signing service.

honesty and ... dignity."

This message was reinforced in the keynote opening address by Archbishop Michael Peers, Primate of Canada and titular head of the Anglican Church. "Never before have we contemplated a possibility such as the one we are now facing," Peers told the delegates. "We have come to the moment in history in which we may be facing the winding up of General Synod." However, he stressed:

"What is under threat nationally is the General Synod of the Anglican Church, not the Anglican Church of Canada. It is the structures that are at risk, not the essence of our life.

"We are a community held together not by structures, but by relationship. Relationship endures and it will prosper," the Primate said. "We can dare to face the future with hope, with heart and confidence."

Bishop Gordon Beardy of Keewatin formally forgave the church for its past dealings with indigenous peoples at a native healing ceremony during the meeting of the General Synod. The forgiveness comes eight years after the Primate, Archbishop Michael

Peers, apologized on behalf of the church for its part in the residential school system. That apology was accepted at the time by the elders at the national native convocation held in Minaki, Ont. in 1993. As the Primate stood quietly beside him, head bowed, Bishop Beardy made it clear that he spoke not as a bishop, but as a native person who had attended residential school.

"I accept your apology because you have worked so hard to break down the barriers.... Where once we were outsiders, today we are with you, as a friend, as a leader, as a brother. So, I extend my hand." Following his statement, the bishop and primate clasped hands and embraced for half a minute.

'Not a white church anymore'

"Sometimes an apology can be empty but this church is developing, progressing. We have communities healing, we are responding, we are hearing native people and I am proud," said Bishop Beardy. "This is not a white church anymore; I feel it is our church."

In another action that has been some time in the making, the ACC elected to follow general principles of human rights in its dealings with anyone they minister to or employ by adopting a document calling for fair treatment of all.

The vote caps off more than 20 years of debate about whether or not the church should follow the same human rights principles as the secular world or whether it should have a different standard. At issue for many delegates was the fear that adopting a human rights policy at the national level might interfere with dioceses' and churches' rights to hire, or not hire, whom they wish.

"This document is about sexual orientation and promotion of gay love and bisexual love in the Anglican Church of Canada," charged one Bishop. "Your next rector could be a practising bisexual and the person teaching your Sunday school could be in an open marriage."

The document was adopted with a large majority.

Pope tries to build bridges to Greek, Ukrainian Christians

... continued from page 1

Catholic population that has suffered severe persecution, assuaging Orthodox resentment over the growing role of his church, and bringing moral direction to a nation worn out by decades of communism. He put off his trip for 10 years, aware that a negative reaction from the Russian Orthodox could forever block a visit to Moscow — another long-standing dream of his papacy. The reason he finally got on the plane to Kiev was that he felt Ukraine, struggling in so many ways to find its identity, deeply needed the spiritual orientation he could offer.

In Ukraine, the Pope told Orthodox believers, "I have not come here with the intention of proselytizing." Instead, the message that God cares was one of the most important points he wanted to get across, reports CNS. When he did talk about Christian unity, it focused not on wrangling over church properties, but on the gift of unity-in-diversity given to the church at Pentecost and the need for mutual forgiveness over past wrongs. Throughout the visit, the pope spoke the Ukrainians' language, quoted their poets and philosophers, and said he had come as a true friend.

Jim Payton, Professor of History of Eastern Europe at Redeemer University College in

Ancaster, Ont., sees deep significance in the Pope's recent visit to Greece, which he says helped to build bridges between the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches. That was the first time a Pope had visited Greece in 1291 years, according to Evangelical News International (ENI).

Orthodox Christians bear a strong resentment against Christians from Western Europe because of the Fourth Crusade of 1204, says Payton. At that time, crusaders conquered Constantinople (present-day Istanbul), "destroyed an empire and ravaged it," he explains. Many people saw that as "a manifestation of incredible perversity" and "it's still a painful living memory" — although few people in the West are familiar with that crusade.

Forgiveness for crusade

While in Greece, "the Pope asked for forgiveness for the Fourth Crusade," says Payton. "That had never been done. Now, how is the Orthodox Church to respond? There is nothing the Pope could have done that would have been more dramatic. To make this gesture is utterly remarkable."

In Greece, the Pope made a courtesy visit to Archbishop Christodoulos of Athens and All Greece, reported ENI. After a private meeting of 30 minutes, Pope



COURTESY JIM PAYTON

Jim Payton, Professor of History at Redeemer University College.

John Paul and Archbishop Christodoulos spoke publicly. Speaking Greek, the Greek archbishop said the Pope's visit "brings us joy. Our joy is, however, overshadowed by the fact of our division."

Archbishop Christodoulos then referred to religious differences between the Orthodox and Roman Catholics, some of which date back more than 1000 years. He mentioned in particular the crusaders' sacking of Constantinople, and a more recent source of tension between Greece and the Catholic Church, the Vatican's failure to condemn the partition of Cyprus, following the Turkish invasion of 1974.

The archbishop also mentioned problems regarding Eastern

Catholic churches — which celebrate Orthodox liturgy but are linked to Rome, and are viewed by many Orthodox as a Vatican ploy to entice Orthodox Christians into the Roman flock. The Vatican used to view the Eastern Catholic churches as a possible means to unite western and eastern Christianity, but in recent years, in face of the Orthodox hostility towards the policy, this view has been dropped.

Pope John Paul replied: "For the occasions past and present, when sons and daughters of the Catholic Church have sinned by action or omission against their Orthodox brothers and sisters, may the Lord grant us forgiveness. I am thinking of the disastrous sack of the imperial city of Constantinople, which was for so long a bastion of Christianity in the East."

The Pope said nothing about Cyprus, but indirectly referred to the Eastern Catholic issue, stating simply that "certain models of reunion of the past no longer correspond to the impulse towards unity which the Holy Spirit has awakened in Christians everywhere in recent times."

In general, says Payton, "the Pope is definitely trying to reach out to Eastern Orthodox Christians and trying to heal the rift." One reason might be that "he himself is a Slav. Most of the Slavs are

Orthodox in heritage."

Dominus Iesus

Last year, the Pope signed a declaration called *Dominus Iesus*, which spoke of the "unicity" of the Church, but which declared: "The Church of Christ, despite the divisions which exist among Christians, continues to exist fully only in the Catholic Church..." Although the declaration states, "Outside of her structure, many elements can be found of sanctification and truth, that is, in those churches and ecclesial communities which are not yet in full communion with the Catholic Church," it asserts: "they derive their efficacy from the very fullness of grace and truth entrusted to the Catholic Church."

Despite the Pope's approval of that report, Vandervelde does not see the Pope's efforts at ecumenism with Orthodox churches as being a contradiction. Orthodox churches are not mentioned in the report, which he says refers to Protestant churches as suffering from defects.

Payton says, "There are tensions all the way around about that report [*Dominus Iesus*]." But just as that report called the Roman Catholic Church the only true one, some Orthodox church leaders say, "We believe the true church is Orthodox."

News/Politics

Catholic Church sets sights on small arms trade

NEW YORK (Zenit.org) — Saying it “is not an absolute right” to bear and trade in small arms, the Vatican advocated steps to limit and regulate the flow of such weapons. Monsignor Celestino Migliore, Vatican undersecretary for relations with states, addressed a U.N. conference to curb small arms.

The head of the Vatican delegation began his address by stating that since “there is a close relationship between weapons and violence, weapons and destruction, weapons and hatred coupled with social disintegration, arms cannot be treated simply like commercial goods.”

Migliore said that “the ethical, social and humanitarian impor-

ance of the topic under discussion cannot be separated from, but in fact must serve as the framework for, any consideration of the supply and demand of small arms and light weapons for security, political and economic reasons.”

While for “certain types of weapons, such as anti-personnel mines, it has been possible to devise a convention that prohibits their use, stockpiling, production and transfer,” he pointed out. “...small arms and light weapons are the primary weapons used in conflicts of every kind throughout the world.”

Migliore conceded: “In a world marked by evil, ...the right of legitimate defense by means of arms exists. This right can become a

serious duty for those who are responsible for the lives of others, for the common good of the family, or of the civil community. This right alone can justify the possession or transfer of arms.”

Not an absolute right

However, he added, it “is not an absolute right, since there are specific conditions placed on the licitness of the production, possession and acquisition of arms.”

The Vatican representative said that, in addressing the problem of illicit traffic in arms, the ultimate goal is the “protection of the life and dignity of each and every human person.” He continued: “Civil populations suffer the most tragic consequences from the use of light

weapons and small arms; the majority of the victims of these arms are civilians, most of whom are women and children.”

Children suffer evil effect

“Children in particular suffer a twofold evil effect,” he said, “since on the one hand they are passively exposed to the dangers of these arms and, on the other, they play an active part in conflicts when

they are forced into the reprehensible role of child-soldiers.”

Migliore appealed for “strong action, on the part of the international community, which must show particular concern for children affected by conflict situations in various regions of the world, and must work to reunite them with their families, and reintegrate them into society by appropriate means of rehabilitation.”

Joachim of Fiora: once condemned, now to be proclaimed a saint

COSENZA, Italy (Zenit.org) — Joachim of Flora (or Fiora), one of the most exciting and controversial figures in the Church history, could be on the road to being proclaimed a saint.

The archbishop introducing his cause of beatification (like an attorney representing a client) wrote that Joachim’s greatness “cannot be reduced to that of an outstanding scholar or researcher, but to his adherence to the faith, understood and expressed ascetically.” The eighth centenary of his death is March 30, 2002.

650-year process

The monk’s defenders argue that process of canonization, begun about 650 years ago, was interrupted because of the suspicious doctrines of some of his followers, the Joachimists or Pseudo-Joachimists.

If he is recognized at all nowadays, it is because of the hugely popular novel *The Name of the Rose* by Umberto Eco and the film based on it; some of the stranger characters being pursued as heretics in that story were Joachimites.

‘Blessed Joachim’

His fame for sanctity “has been preserved in time, so much so that the people of God have always called him ‘Blessed Joachim,’” said the archbishop promoting his cause. As early as 1346 there was a move to begin the canonical process, though it is not known why it “came to nothing.”

Joachim was born in Colico, near Cosenza, around 1130. Following a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, he entered the Cistercian Order around 1152-1153. He had a special interest in Scripture studies. Because of this, he retired to a solitary place in San Giovanni in Flora, or Fiora, and later founded an abbey in the place that would

give his branch of the order its name.

Joachim had an eschatological vision, according to which history is divided in three phases: the age of the Father (that of the Old Testament), the age of the Son (lived by the Church after Christ’s resurrection), and the age of the Spirit, which has already begun and should culminate with the affirmation of monastic spirituality over traditional ecclesiastical structures.

This view had marked influence on ascetic movements at the end of the Middle Ages, particularly on spiritual and Apocalyptic currents, and even on some Franciscans. Some of the Anabaptist sects that arose at the time of the Reformation were also said to be influenced by the idea of three ages as were later secular socialist movements. The last age, the age of the Spirit, was to be marked by the absence of all external compulsion, such as law and other structures, so that all obedience and order would come only from the heart; hence, his name is often associated with antinomianism.

His teachings also influenced Abbot Pietro of Morrone, who was elected Pope in 1294 and took the name Celestine V. After five months as pope, Celestine V resigned, because this eschatological view made him afraid of being corrupted if he remained in the governance of the Church.

The doctrines promoted by Joachim’s followers were condemned in the fourth Lateran Council (1215) and the Council of Arles (1260).

(With added information by editor.)

Lotteries: not just harmless games

Not too long ago it seemed that, every time I ventured into the corner variety store to buy, say, a newspaper, milk bags or a tank of gas, I was asked whether I wished to play the “649.” I would repeatedly say no, until one day the woman behind the counter apparently detected a tone of exasperation in my voice and finally quit asking. I would assume that her making this request was due to company policy, and I didn’t like to see her get in trouble for not doing her job. Still, I found the requests increasingly irritating. And she did finally stop. But just before she did, she asked whether I had religious objections against playing the lottery.

To be honest, I had never given it much thought. When one is given to attending to such weighty matters as Middle East peace, the on-going bloodshed in the Balkans and the future of post-communist Russia, the lottery seems like a minor irritant at worst. Yet its increasingly ubiquitous presence is indicative of a disturbing trend towards the easy acceptance of gambling as an apparently harmless pastime in our society.

Element of suspense and surprise

To be sure, the laws of chance are rooted in God’s creative intention. They are not only of interest to people of a mathematical bent; they also increase our enjoyment of certain kinds of games of chance. Many card and board games depend, not only on personal skill, but on an element of chance which can sometimes confound even the best of players. Such games as Monopoly are considered fun simply because one never knows whether one will land on Park Place or on “Go to Jail; do not collect \$200.” There is thus an element of suspense and surprise.

But when money enters the picture, so do greed and gullibility. Indeed, government-sponsored lotteries and casinos can be considered a kind of tax on the gullible. People generally do not like to pay taxes and often complain of being overtaxed. Governments are thus tempted to look for ostensibly

painless ways to raise revenues. Lotteries seem like a good solution. People willingly play lotteries, which are a proven source of funding for cash-strapped governments.

Paying the inevitable price

Yet playing the lottery is not a harmless game. Lured by television advertisements inviting them to “just imagine” a life free from want, many people divert their families’ scarce financial resources, committing more and more money to a vain effort at winning untold riches. The odds are, of course, heavily against them, but this does not deter them. Furthermore, for some people gambling is an addiction, and they rack up huge debts waiting for the day when the expected windfall will come their way and enable them to live a life of ease and plenty. Of course, nothing of the sort happens, and their marriages and families pay the inevitable price.

Governments are called by God to do justice to all. According to scripture, political rulers have a special responsibility to do justice to those who are most vulnerable — those whom the Old Testament labels the widow, the orphan and the stranger. But in sponsoring lotteries, governments do precisely the opposite. They are, in fact, preying on the vulnerable by appealing to the worst in them. In so doing, they are contributing to the impoverishment of the gullible, to the breakup of marriages and the shattering of families. Ironically, they are contributing to the very problems they will undoubtedly be called upon to address at some point in the future.

Justice thus demands that governments get out of the lottery business once and for all.



David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario, and isn’t all that fond of either board or card games.

Principalities & Powers

David T. Koyzis

Editorial

Loving ourselves in our technology and in our art

Harry der Nederlanden

Elsewhere in this issue you will find a review of the film *A.I.* (artificial intelligence) by Ron Vandenburg. As he points out, it has received mixed reviews, but it is worthwhile seeing for what it attempts to do. Whether it succeeds is another question.

It did succeed in stimulating me to reflect on certain themes that pop up everywhere in our culture. The theologian Miroslav Volf in a recent book *Exclusion and Embrace* dwells on how human beings seek to exclude others different from themselves to protect their own privileges. Volf draws effectively on his identity as a Croatian and on the terrible outbreak of hatred, violence and even genocide during the breakup of Yugoslavia. The propensity to set ourselves apart and over against others, whom we then see as a threat to our own position, is the source of unspeakable violence. In view of all the civil and tribal wars, the racial tensions and the refugee camps in all parts of the world, this is certainly an important topic in our day, and Volf shows us that the Bible gives us a lot of direction here.

Redesigning genes

The film *A.I.* suggests another angle of approach, one that gets support from the debates raised by the new bio-technologies being developed that enable us to (re)design our own genetic make-up. Some scientists are already claiming they can now start a baby growing even without a father, that is, without sperm.

Most of the know-how is already available that would allow us to take a cell from any person and in the lab produce offspring from that person, perhaps even an identical twin differing only in age — a clone, a replica.

Much of the discussion revolves around replicating ourselves, if not as exact copies — clones — then as offspring resembling ourselves. Some couples can't have children, and the new technology may give them a chance at children who carry their genes, who are like them. Some people avoid having children because they are carriers of awful diseases. The new technology may give them a chance to have children, but without the genetic flaws that would condemn them to a life of suffering. Most couples still prefer having their own children rather than adopting.

Longing for eternal life

The desire to see ourselves perpetuated in our children is a powerful one. In fact, it is so powerful a desire that many poets have associated it with our longing for eternal life. We live on in our children and in our children's children.

Beyond just passing on our genes, many novels and dramas depict fathers who seek to perpetuate their own dreams and works through their offspring by seeking to shape their children in their own image, often with tragic results. Traditional Freudian psychoanalysis draws much of its material and force from this desire.

More positively, we speak of the importance of modelling behavior, not just in novels and films, but also in parenting, teaching and sports. This, too, is about creating likenesses of ourselves — of our better selves. Likenesses of likenesses. We project a likeness and seek to embody it so that our children will imitate it.

Likeness — replicating ourselves — is a very fundamental motive in human life. More fundamental in many ways than excluding others.

We employ not just our personal skills as parents but also the power of the state, of our churches and our schools, of our art and stories to shape following generations in our image.

It is this impulse that *A.I.* explores. It is set in a future society where high water levels have covered much of the land, so resources are scarce and there are strict limits on population. So people have created a race of robots (Mechas) to take over all sorts of human functions without needing to be fed. At the time the story takes place, the human population has grown disillusioned by this race of pseudo-humans it has created to be their companions, their offspring, in a sense.

The likeness becomes monstrous.

This anxiety about our own creations turning strange is hardly a new theme, of course. It emerged almost side by side with our dependence on the machine in the West. Mary Shelley wrote *Frankenstein*, a novel in which a scientist tries to create a living being like himself, in the early 1800s. There, too, the likeness becomes monstrous.

The robot boy in *A.I.* — David — is a robot who embodies the quest named in the title, the quest for a machine that thinks like us. Actually, the title is a bit of a misnomer, for this robot is created not just to think, but also to feel, to love. When the robot boy is discarded because the real one returns, the movie becomes the story of the robot boy's quest for the love of his "mother", that is, for the love of the human he has been

programmed to love.

The movie becomes a perverse *Pilgrim's Progress* as we see the robot boy pass through several stages in his search for the status of true, human sonship. We empathize with the humanness of this desire to recover the love of the mother who discarded him, largely because in his robotic innocence he is more childlike than a real child, but we are also put off by its obsessiveness and futility. The boy is literally caught up in a fairy tale — the story of Pinocchio, the puppet who is finally brought to life by a blue fairy.

Fascinated and disturbed

We are, I think, at once fascinated and disturbed by the boy's pilgrimage because it is at one and the same time so human and yet so alien. Being made to love, the robot boy embodies the love of his maker and mother, a love that is fixated on a transcendent source. No, not on God but on a new, improved version of ourselves — a creature without flaws and who does not age. Science, fantasy and religion are woven together in the images used by Spielberg to culminate, not in hope for a better future but in a moment of fulfilment that is wholly a simulacrum, an illusion.

Most of us will agree that there is something sinister and violent in the desire, exemplified by cloning, to make ourselves in our own image, according to our own scientifically purified likeness. We would be less willing to acknowledge that this same impulse drives our ethic of storytelling and even our religion, to say nothing of our politics and education. Spielberg's film puts before us the question whether the kind of love that drives our culture isn't a reductive, regressive love that gets us — and our children — caught up in simulacra of reality, in false, fleeting images, in fantasies of love. Our vision of a higher intelligence, a more perfect humanity, whose images elicit our desire, our love, in every ad and commercial, trap us in the same infantile quest as the robot boy.

I didn't mean to launch into another commentary on the film, but merely wanted to use it to reflect on our human need to reproduce ourselves — in our children, in our society, in our culture. This is not something external to being human; it is part of our very nature. *A.I.*, and much else in our culture and in events not just in Croatia but also in the politics of Canada and America, compels us to see that there is violence not just in our exclusions, in our enmities, but in our — commendable — efforts to pass on what is best and highest in ourselves. It is easy to see evil in the face of a Hitler or a Milosevic; it is harder to see it in ourselves as we create our own machinery by which to replicate ourselves in our children.

Perhaps that is why the first thing the Lord asks us to do as parents is to drown our children in the Red Sea so that he may restore them to life as his own, so that when we raise them, we raise them not to grow into our image but into *his*, who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. In him, in his image, we were created, and only into his image can we be re-created as creatures truly able to know, to live and to love. To create a culture and a politics that does not just encapsulate us and ours in an incestuous sameness is a huge, insurmountable challenge that will only shatter us — unless first we allow ourselves and our self-images to be shattered on the rock that makes us fall so that we may be raised up new.

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Letter

Ministers and councils: the Cephas model

I have followed with interest the recent discussion in C.C. between Messrs. van der Woerd and Hofstee, in respect to certain restrictions imposed by provincial law on CRC ministers in our churches in Ontario unless, as Mr. van der Woerd points out, an enabling court order is obtained permitting the exception.

Any thoughtful, reasonable attempt to comply with the enabling legislation and regulations made thereunder will avoid unnecessary alarm. To speak of prosecution is at this juncture perhaps somewhat out of place. Established churches are not the primary object, but as charitable organizations, they are affected by it.

Meeting legal requirement

The model in place at Cephas CRC in Peterborough — and perhaps in CRC churches elsewhere in the province — would appear to meet the requirement of law.

The "Board of Directors" of Cephas CRC is Cephas Church Council. Its standing membership is composed of all elders and deacons elected by the congregation. Council itself elects annually its "officers": a non-minister chair, vice-president and clerk, all of them elders. The church treasurer is appointed as an officer sitting on the Board of Stewards. It is these four who are recorded on our annual provincial return. We are provincially incorporated, not federally.

In our annual federal charities return to Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, the entire Council is listed and the pastor shown as its minister employed by the charity.

Pastor: a standing advisor

The minister's status, as a salaried employee of the corporation, is that of a standing "advisor" to Council, but he has no vote. If you will, he is there by standing invitation as a respected, expertly qualified resource person, who is given the floor at the discretion of the chair. We hold that this arrangement satisfies the "composition" edict of Church Order Article 35.

It is Council which, as "directors" of a charitable organization, discharges its fiduciary or trustee-like obligations, dictated by civil law in this province, while also meeting its responsibilities outlined in the Church Order. It meets monthly. No "member" of Council is paid. Liability insurance is purchased for them by the corporation. We know of no legal impediment that prevents the controlling board from availing itself of advisory resources, such as its

minister, in discharging its duties.

Reporting to Council are two subsidiary bodies under its supervision: (a) the Consistory or "Elders Meeting," and (b) the Diaconate or "Deacons Meeting."

The Elders Meeting is chaired by the minister on a standing basis. Meeting monthly, its mandate is strictly pastoral in nature. The clerk of Council is the recording secretary for the Elders Meeting and presents its report to Council monthly, excluding confidential pastoral matters.

The Deacons Meeting elects its own chair on an annual basis. Its mandate, too, follows the referenced Church Order Article. It meets monthly and its chair presents a report to Council on a monthly basis.

Church Order Article 36 provides that each body shall select its own president (chair) and other officers. It replaces the former provision which read that "A minister shall ordinarily preside at meetings of the council and the consistory..."

All other subsidiary committees report to Church Council by means of a council member appointed to it as Council Liaison. One of these is the Board of Stewards, on which the church treasurer has a permanent seat in addition to the appointed Council Liaison. In its Council-mandated assets management duties is included the preparation of the church budget for presentation to Council and thereafter by Council to the

congregation for approval at the requisite annual meeting, which is chaired by the chair of Council, not the minister.

Clear division of responsibilities

This structure clearly divides lines of responsibilities between temporal and ecclesiastical domains.

Given that we view the Church Order as outlining minimum standards to be met, and in the absence of a prohibition against exceeding them, Church Council is also served by an Executive Committee, composed of the serving chair of Council as its chair, the Council vice-president representing the Elders Meeting, the chair of the Deacons Meeting (or delegate) and the clerk of Council. Again, the minister serves on this body as an "advisor."

The Executive Committee has no decision-making authority. Rather, it serves as an organizing administrative mechanism, such as preparing Council Agenda and ensuring that necessary support materials are distributed to Council members in advance of meetings and, in general, facilitating and ensuring the smooth functioning of Council as controlling board.

Our local bylaw documentation (at present under revision) reflects what has been outlined.

Repeated attendance at annual "Church and The Law" seminars in Toronto, conducted by the law firm Wardlaw Mullin Carter &

Thwaites, sponsored by the Canadian Council of Christian Charities, at minimum suggests that our local compromise appears to conform with law, without sacrificing the valued leadership qualities of our minister, and should, therefore, not run afoul of the Public Guardian & Trustee of Ontario, whom I am given to understand,

considers established churches and their ministers as the least of his priorities.

Perhaps these observations are of some assistance in contributing to Mr. Hofstee's search for practical information in respect to this topic.

Ralph L. De Groot,
Peterborough, Ont.

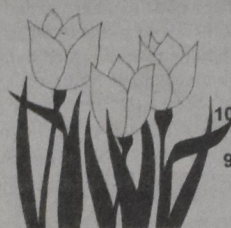
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News/Education

Bible citations comprise hate speech, says Saskatchewan commission

SASKATOON, Saskatchewan (Zenit.org) — What do Romans 1, Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, and I Corinthians 6:9-10 have in common?

References to them can be "hate speech," says the Canadian province of Saskatchewan's Human Rights Commission.

In a ruling last month, the commission ordered both the Saskatoon *StarPhoenix* newspaper and Hugh Owens of Regina to pay \$1,500 to three homosexual activists for publishing an advertisement with the references to four biblical verses condemning homosexuality, the national *Catholic Register* reported.

The ruling also bars Owens from "further publishing or displaying the bumper stickers" upon which his newspaper advertisement was based, according to the *Register*.

On June 30, 1997, Owens placed an advertisement in the *StarPhoenix*, on the occasion of Saskatoon's Homosexual Pride Week. His ad listed four Bible references followed by an equal sign

and the universal prohibition sign — a circle with a slash — containing two stick-men holding hands.

In its decision against Owens and the *StarPhoenix*, the human rights commission judged that, "while the stick-figures are more neutral," it is the "combination of the prohibition symbol with the Bible passages that exposes homosexuals to hatred."

The three homosexual activists had filed a complaint with the human rights commission, noting that provincial and federal human rights codes both include "sexual orientation" as a protected category. The commission ruled that the provincial human rights code can place "reasonable restriction" on Owen's religious expression, since the advertisement exposed the complainants "to hatred, ridicule, and their dignity was affronted on the basis of their sexual orientation."

Father Paul Donlevy, vicar general for the Diocese of Saskatoon, testified before the panel that the Catholic Church understands sexual orientation may not be chosen,

but nevertheless "every person is called to holiness ... and homosexuals are called to the same sexual morality as any other unmarried people."

He told the *Register*: "I certainly hope this decision is appealed. It's a great concern that simply referring to biblical scriptures can be called hate speech. Soon, we'll be so politically correct, we won't be able to preach."

Homosexual litigant Gens Hellquist said he was pleased with the tribunal's decision. "There are standards for what's fair comment regarding Jews and racial minorities," he said, "and now the

commission has set standards on fair comment regarding homosexuals." Hellquist added: "Owens' agenda is really scary. He didn't say it in so many words, but he really believes that judges should put homosexuals to death."

For his part, Owens, 50, an evangelical Christian and career corrections officer, says he placed the newspaper advertisement as "a Christian response" to Homosexual Pride Week.

"I put the biblical references, but not the actual verses, so the ad would become interactive," he said. "I figured somebody would have to look them up in the Bible

first, or if they didn't have a Bible, they'd have to find one."

Owens denies that, as a Christian, he wants homosexuals put to death, as some inferred from the biblical passages. But he does believe that "eternal salvation is at stake," both for those engaging in homosexual acts and for himself, if he fails to inform them about "what God says about their behavior." Owens believes his case is clearly a collision between religious freedom and sexual orientation rights. He is planning to appeal the decision, and thinks his case may end up before the Supreme Court of Canada.

Psychological association proposal may jeopardize Christian college programs

NEW YORK, N.Y. (EP) — A proposal under consideration by the American Psychological Association (APA) would end an exemption to its accrediting programs that provides accommodation for "distinctive religious views."

The proposal could jeopardize doctoral programs in psychology at church-affiliated colleges and universities that admit only students with certain religious beliefs.

According to APA spokesperson Rhea Farberman, the APA is considering the move to mandate diversity in all accredited programs. "The goal of psychology and a value that we hold very dear is a value for diversity, respect for different types of people, all different types of people, and preparing students to work in a very diverse world," Farberman said.

One aspect of diversity, according to APA, is acceptance of homosexuality — a position at odds with many religious groups. "Diversity includes people of faith," Farberman insists. "It includes people of different colors. It includes people of different sexual orientation."

Ironically, in its alleged pursuit of "diversity," the APA may wind

up excluding many religious perspectives from the field of clinical psychology. Under U.S. Department of Education policy, the APA is the only organization that accredits doctoral programs in psychology in the U.S. Many states require graduation from an APA-accredited school before licensing a person to act as a clinical psychologist.

The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty issued a position paper noting that the proposed policy would require "religious schools to ignore the faith perspective of their students and faculty, as well as those to whom their graduates will counsel as psychologists." It also notes that because the APA acts as an agent of the federal government, it must abide by provisions of the U.S. Constitution which protect the free exercise of religion.

The Becket Fund urges interested persons to register their objections with APA during a public comment period that ends Sept. 1, 2001. To contact the APA, write to: Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation, American Psychological Association, 750 First Street N.E., Washington, DC 20002-4242; Fax: (202) 336-5978; e-mail: accredcomments@apa.org.

Campus ministry in the desert (I): the Navajo way

You've heard lots of stories from me at Brock in Ontario. In the next two articles, I want to feature CRC campus ministers from a very different setting: the desert. I first of all want to introduce you to Tony Begay, a gentle, unassuming campus minister to the University of New Mexico and the Southwestern Indian Polytechnical Institute, both of which are in Albuquerque. I spent five days in the New Mexico semi-desert with him this summer.

Tony's grandfather was a Navajo medicine man, and his father was to become one, too. Even his mother was deeply into native spirituality. But through the Bible stories of a Dutch CRC missionary, both his parents became Christians and Tony was sent to the boarding school at the Rehoboth CRC mission. Tony went from there to Dordt College and then Calvin Seminary. Since then he has been a church pastor, a military chaplain for the air force, and a campus minister.

Crossing cultures

Tony describes his ministry as being first and foremost a cross-cultural ministry. Many of the students he befriends are of native American background, and he invites them to relationship, Bible study, and church.

Tony's current research is in the area of self-identity, something of vital importance to the Navajo student who is away from traditional culture and trying to find his or her way in the modern university. Tony works with a scale from C1 to C10 to reflect the amount of acculturation in a person's life. C1 is very traditional, and the person probably doesn't speak English. C10 is the educated urban dweller who cannot speak the Navajo language. Tony labels himself as a C8, as he is well-educated and married to a Dutch American CRC woman, but teaches the Navajo language at university.

The Navajo encounter with "Anglos" (as Tony calls us) is rife with cruelty and discrimination. The most despicable incident, forever seared into the memories of the Navajo people, is the Kit Carson campaign. Carson volunteered himself to "manage" the native population, and proceeded to do so by burning their crops and butchering them. In an incident known as The Long Walk, the Navajo people were forced to relocate from their

Campus Culture

Peter Schuurman



homeland — a walk of some 300 miles, and those who could not keep up were shot.

This legacy lives on. In 1995, of the 170,000 people in the official Navajo Nation, 77.5 per cent of the homes have no telephone and 56.1 per cent of persons live below the poverty line. "Sometimes Navajo people see themselves as a 'conquered' people," said Tony, "and they feel like second class citizens. Some Navajo, like my mother, saw the Anglos as gods."

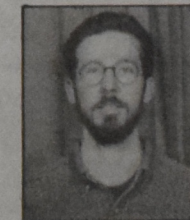
"Some white people see natives in the same way today," I mused. "As if they are one with the creation and possess a secret knowledge that might heal us and our polluted planet. As you said, the heart of Navajo spirituality is the imperative to live in harmony with the earth."

The secret that could change the world

Then Tony said the most profound thing I've ever heard, and what makes it so spectacular is that if you ever met Tony, you'll know everything he says is straight from the heart. "It can be hard not to hate the Anglos for what they have done to my people — for such things as The Long Walk. But I think of God's forgiveness of me and God's love for me and I can then turn to my Anglo neighbor in love. Love is better than fear or hate."

Tony's words are simple, but they are words that can change the world. And the gracious, generous way Tony treated me when I visited him was one small indication that Tony lives what he says.

In fact, Tony invites all university students to come down and get a taste for Navajo culture and history. Every June/July, for six weeks, he supervises a cross-cultural ministry team with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship called The Navajo Project. Tony will take you, as he did me, through the Navajo reserve, stopping to visit churches and missions and of course, tasting Navajo food along the way. The mutton stew with fry bread can be a real treat. All students of faith and culture are welcome.



Peter Schuurman is the Christian Reformed campus chaplain at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont.

Arts/Media

Film Review

Created in the image of their creator

A.I. [Artificial Intelligence]

Reviewed by Ron VandenBurg

By the middle of July, *A.I.* had been deemed a flop by all noted movie pundits. After 17 days in the theatre, Steven Spielberg's sci-fi epic collected \$70.1 million at the box office. At first people said the film would have to struggle to bring in \$100 million; now it looks like it will be lucky to hit \$85 million. Dreamworks hopes international success, particularly in Japan, might just save its pocket book.

Can humans love robots?

A.I. is based on the short story "Supertoys Last All Summer Long" by Brian Aldiss. When the film begins, we see Martin, the cryogenically frozen son of Monica and Henry. Because her son has not died, Monica is unable to grieve. Meanwhile, in a Mecha (android) think tank, Professor Hobby (William Hurt) has shared his new plans with his colleagues: he wants to create a mechanical boy who can love. One of the professor's students asks the question: "Can humans truly love an android?"

The professor answers that God made Adam to be loved. (Here of course C.C. readers can get into an interesting discussion about free will). Swept up in the possibilities of job promotion, Henry brings home David the robot boy to Monica. Initially upset, she comes to like David as a replacement for her own son and makes a fateful decision that changes David into an android who can love.

Little-boy lost

In Haley Joel Osment, who plays David the Mecha, Spielberg has discovered his quintessential little-boy lost. We laugh at David's dinner table foibles, but we feel saddened as he is replaced by Martin the son now returned to his loving family. Abandoned and ignored in a corner of the bedroom, David listens as Monica tells her son the story of Pinocchio, and it is here that David discovers his life quest: to be loved he must become a real boy. The audience's worries for David get even worse when we discover what the real world is like. The Polar Caps are melted, and all the human characters are concerned with their own egocentric emotions, concerns or personal searches for satisfaction. Ironically, the only people we, the



David the robot boy (Haley Joel Osment) takes a walk on the wild side with Gigolo Joe (Jude Law).

audience, are left to care about are the androids who obediently follow the directives of their program — fulfilling the desires and needs of their human owners. As David follows his path to find his own fulfillment, David meets his own Tinman in the form of Gigolo Joe (Jude Law), who becomes David's guide in a world full of human anger and human sexual pleasure.

Human faith in question

The faith of humans come into question by Gigolo Joe. While giving a tour of Rouge City, a futuristic Las Vegas sex city on a bad day, Joe and David come in front of a chapel. Joe tells David that this is where the humans pray to their creator. Gigolo Joe then tells David that it's a great place for Joe to find clients needing his services. If they can't find love from God, they can turn to Joe instead. In counterpoint to this scene, later in the film David's quest leads him to The

Blue Fairy who looks quite a bit like a statue of the Virgin Mary. David's plea to be changed into a boy turns into a prayer to his savior. His faithfulness turns to a programming loop for an eternity.

Audience members will become frustrated with David's futile journey for unconditional love. In a world where supertoys last only until something better comes along, David's persevering faith (or programming, depending on your suspension of disbelief) pushes him to the grand Spielberg fairy tale ending.

Different expectations

But what has made this film a disappointment? People came to the film with very different expectations so that many left the theatre disappointed.

Those expecting a Steven Spielberg blockbuster didn't quite get what they want. Looking for the child-friendly film promised

by movie marketing, families may have been expecting an E.T. type of story: a cute main character surrounded by his friendly sidekicks struggle against cookie-cutter villains. To their surprise, they meet David, a Pinocchio mecha living in a cold, hard world. With Haley Joel Osment playing this character with a mature actor's precision, David the Mecha becomes the innocent who is continually abused by the humans around him. But dashes of Spielberg are present in the form of the wisecracking Teddie the supertoy (Jiminy Cricket to David's Pinocchio), The Blue Fairy motif and the required pull-out-of-the-hat happy ending.

Kubrick fans disappointed

Those expecting a Stanley Kubrick mind bender didn't quite get what they wanted, either. The film maker whose credits include the very violent, futuristic *A Clockwork Orange* and *2001: A Space Odyssey* passed this film project to Spielberg before his death. Spielberg then vowed to make the film as a tribute to his hero. One could see that at some points in the film, Spielberg could not bridge his commitment to Kubrick's disturbing vision with his own popular style.

In his films, Spielberg has not ventured in the realm of exploitation, and his characterization of Gigolo Joe is contradictory, being both sensual and innocent at the same time. I am sure that Kubrick had a darker version for this character instead of the boy scout guide that we see. Spielberg's trip to Rouge City is certainly not for young children and early teens to see. Spielberg should have written on screen, "Sorry to put you through this, but it's all Stanley's idea, don't you know."

What's also interesting is that I

am doing what a number of critics have done: credit the provocative plot devices to Kubrick while all the flash goes to Spielberg. One critic even noted that in *A.I.* the Artificial was Spielberg and the Intelligence was Kubrick. Remember, Spielberg did write the entire screenplay.

People have bandied around the important themes of the movie. It's a film that asks several moral questions: "Can one love without free will?" "Are we responsible to those who love us?" "Does someone's love for us make us responsible to them?" "How do we treat someone once the love has faded?" These moral questions are asked in a sci-fi/fantasy film but they are questions most people face at one time or another.

Theme of responsibility

The most relevant theme, I believe, is one of responsibility. Here is an earth already flooded by the melted ice cap. With a birth control lottery, the world's population is establishing limits, but the robot population is in the billions. Mechas are treated like slaves, and used or broken ones are easily gotten rid of. Some are even abused for show. It's interesting to see how this disposable society would treat the beings it created. Again it goes back to the beginning, when the professor's student asks if a human could love a mecha. One's worldview determines how one uses God's resources, including, the technology of mechas.

Make sure you cheer for the mechas instead of the humans. The humans are cruel, selfish and wasteful. The mechas have a worldview of service, selflessness, dedication, faithfulness and staying true to one's program. Because, after all, that's how they were created.

Food..? For Thought..??

Some people spend so much time dissecting individual trees, that they miss seeing the beauty of the forest.

Likewise, some people pay so much attention to analyzing individual Bible texts that they, too, miss the beauty of the scriptures as a whole: namely the longest love letter ever written by a wounded, but Perfect Groom to his unfaithful Bride!

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Church

Former U.S. president urges unhappy Southern Baptists to move on

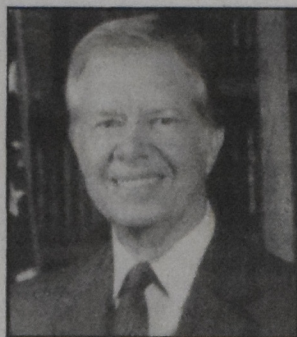
ATLANTA, Georgia (Newsroom) — Former United States President Jimmy Carter is calling for the formation of a new coalition of Baptists who are at odds with the direction of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), the nation's largest Protestant denomination.

Renounced his ties

Carter, who renounced his lifelong ties to the 16-million-member SBC last year, told reporters on June 29 that the two-decade struggle between "traditionalist" and more conservative Southern Baptists is over and the question now is "What can we do to move on?"

Two alliances of moderate Southern Baptists already are functioning: the year-old Mainstream Baptist Network with chapters in 12 states, and the decade-old Co-operative Baptist Fellowship (CBF), to which the Carters belong. The Atlanta-based CBF has 1,800 congregations.

The CBF, Baptists Committed, and two estranged affiliates of the SBC — the Baptist General Convention of Texas and Baptist General Association of Virginia — participated in unpublicized meetings at the Carter Center in Atlanta, according to the Associated Baptist Press (ABP). But Carter wants to expand the coalition to the mainline American Baptist



THE CARTER CENTER
Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter

Churches denomination, African-American conventions, and the European Baptist Federation, an umbrella for national Baptist Unions on the continent.

Rothang Chhangte, ecumenical co-ordinator for the American Baptist Church, told Newsroom that Carter's plans were not brought up last month at the annual meeting in Charlottetown, P.E.I., of the Baptist World Alliance, the official global fellowship that unites 196 Baptist national conventions and unions.

Split defies easy categories

The split among Southern Baptists defies easy categories. Unlike mainline Protestants, such as the Presbyterians and Episcopalians,

the struggle within the SBC is not essentially a conservative vs. modernist battle, according to David Currie of Texas Baptists Committed, a Texas-based activist group. Disaffected Southern Baptists are usually described as moderates, but Currie considers himself a conservative.

Currie, who opposes homosexuality, believes the rift is between conservatives and fundamentalists. His Texas allies are definitely not in the modernist camp, he insists. "In Texas we've got 6,000 churches — if you want to identify the ones called modernist you can probably count them on two hands," he said. "Texas Baptists are just very conservative people, and yet they have rejected fundamentalism overwhelmingly at every (state) convention with votes of 65 and 70 per cent."

Last October, the Baptist General Convention of Texas, which associates with the CBF, voted to withhold \$5 million from key SBC ministries due to disagreement over declarations at the SBC annual meeting earlier last year in Orlando, Florida. Delegates, or "messengers," to the conference, amended the SBC constitution, to read that "while both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by

Scripture." At the 1998 convention in Salt Lake City, the SBC passed an amendment declaring that a woman should "submit herself graciously" to her husband's leadership.

Violating his basic beliefs

Carter cited those developments as critical turning points in his 65-year relationship with the SBC because they "violate the basic premises of my Christian faith." SBC leaders, however, question whether Carter represents traditional Baptist views.

The Reverend Albert Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, insists that Carter's beliefs do not agree with evangelical theology. In an article in the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* responding to Carter, Mohler noted that Carter, in an interview with reporters, attributed the biblical restriction regarding male leadership to human authors of Scripture, who were "fallible human beings who shared the knowledge and beliefs of their times." Southern Baptists believe in biblical inerrancy, that is, the belief that the Bible, inspired by the Holy Spirit, is without error in its teachings.

Currie maintains, however, that the central issue is that Baptists traditionally have eschewed

creeds, or statements of biblical interpretation to which all members must subscribe. "They're setting themselves up to be the definers of biblical authority," Currie said of the SBC. "The local church can make that decision as they study the Scriptures as a local congregation and make their own decisions."

No governing hierarchy

The SBC does not have a governing hierarchy like most mainline denominations, Currie explained. "We are not the United Methodist Church," he said. "The United Methodist Church can argue about homosexuality, it can argue about all that stuff because it ordains. The Baptist church doesn't ordain anybody, local churches do. All this mess could be avoided if we simply acted like Baptists and said, 'We're not going to argue this stuff at a national level.'"

Merrell argues that The Baptist Faith and Message states that Baptists do not accept creeds and that the document itself is not a creed. "We believe that confessions of faith are voluntary — that they are entered into by people who have common understandings and beliefs and the binding nature only goes so far as we believe they are teachings of Scripture," Merrell said. "We believe that the Scripture actually is the normative document for a believer's faith."

Currie contends that the convention's institutions, including seminaries, have been "taken over" in the past two decades by leaders who require agreement with the Baptist Faith and Message as a staff qualification. "Those are very radical changes in how Baptists have operated," Currie asserted. "Baptists were very free, the freest of all denominations. Because of our principles, local church autonomy and priesthood of believers, we didn't worry about the small things we didn't agree on, we co-operated on the big things and that's how we became so big and sent so many missionaries."

The SBC began to shift in a more conservative direction in 1979 when delegates to the SBC annual meeting, who elect a new president each year, chose conservative pastor Adrian Rogers as SBC president. They have selected a conservative in each successive year. Biblical inerrancy was the "issue that brought the conservative movement to leadership in the SBC," Mohler said.

Conservatives now are in charge of SBC's six seminaries, Currie said.

Indian villagers say 'No' to Hinduization of education

Abhijeet Prabhu

BANGALORE, India (Compass) — Villagers in India's Goa region have begun their battle against a Hindu extremist takeover of primary education.

When schools reopened on June 6 after the summer vacation, the villagers organized to hinder new pro-Hindu organizations from taking over their schools that formerly belonged to the government. They banded together to form the Committee for the Protection of Government Primary Schools (CPGPS).

Church pioneers education in Goa

More than 35 per cent of Goa's 1.5 million inhabitants are Christian. The church has been the pioneer of primary and secondary education for centuries in this tiny state of southwestern India. Goa performance in education is reported to be the best in the country.

Christians in the region have always lived in peace with neighbors of other faiths. In recent times, a pro-Hindu Bharatiya Janatha Party

government has been elected to power. There have been attempts to incite communal hatred between Christians and Hindus, which have failed.

The government had recently decided to privatize 52 primary schools in rural areas of Goa under the pretext of a declining student rate. It decided to hand them over to unregistered organizations like Mahila Mandals (women's groups), cultural bodies and sports clubs.

Sources allege that all these groups have been started and financed by Hindu fundamentalist organizations. "The Sangh Parivar has floated such organizations overnight, making application with a request to allow them to set up private schools. The hidden agenda is to use the schools to propagate their 'Hindutva ideology,'" claims Dr. Sachin Kandolkar, a Marathi lecturer whose speech in a literary meeting was said to have brought the issue into the limelight.

Sanjay Raut, convener of the CPGPS, also alleges that, "Most of

these organizations are bogus, unregistered and have nothing to do with the field of education. What is the logic behind allowing such institutions to run schools?" he asks.

Professor Subhash Velingkar, the local RSS (a pro-Hindu group) leader, does not deny their plan to centrally manage these schools through Vidya Bharati, which is the educational institution of the RSS ideological family.

Preserving which culture?

"We are doing it to preserve our culture," said Velingkar, according to a report in the *Goa Times*.

Though the language of the people is Konkani, most of the state-run schools function in Marathi, which is the language of the neighboring state of Maharashtra. Velingkar claims that the RSS has been forced to take over the schools lest "English" be made the medium of instruction and the local culture be wiped out.

However, protestors say that it is not the local culture but the culture of a neighboring state which is predominantly Hindu that is being

imposed on their children.

Ramesh Gawas, president of the Rashtra Seva Dal (State Service Organization), alleges that it is a carefully orchestrated conspiracy to introduce Hindutva (militant Hinduism) culture to the children under the guise of Marathi.

Sources say that Chief Minister Manohar Parikkar, who is himself a member of the RSS, has handed over the school properties at a nominal annual rate. He has also given freedom to the organizations taking over the schools to complete the process of registering themselves within three months.

Parikkar is now refusing to re-open the schools if the villagers continue to agitate and oppose his decision to privatize the schools.

However, the state committee for education is compelling the government to put the privatization decision on hold until a proper re-survey is conducted in consultation with educators, leading high schools and local people in a democratic manner.

Church

The South set to export Gospel to northern hemisphere

Alex Duval Smith

PRETORIA, South Africa (ENI) — While the northern hemisphere's aid agencies propagate western values in poor nations, African churches are ready to take the Gospel back to the industrialized world from where it came, a conference in South Africa heard recently.

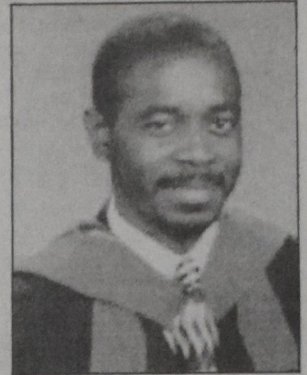
Speaking at the third and final

conference of the Currents in World Christianity project, Jehu Hanciles, a 36-year-old theologian from Sierra Leone, said that, of all religions, the Christian faith is the most adaptable to local conditions. Far from dying out, he said, it is set to be reinvented and exported to the countries which sent their missionaries to Africa during the colonial era.

The five-day meeting (July 3-7) brought together 120 theologians, historians and sociologists from all over the world to look at the effect of globalization on Christians and the extent to which their religion is now rooted in the southern hemisphere.

In a paper delivered at the conference, Hanciles, a Anglican theologian teaching at Fuller

Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, said, "The processes of globalization have contributed to an explosion in the number of non-governmental organizations. NGOs — most of which originate in the industrialized countries — grew from 6,000 to 26,000 in the 1990s and provide more aid than the whole United Nations system. In Africa, they ... often wield more power and influence than emasculated and impoverished governments."



FULLER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Jehu Hanciles

On preaching

In her delightful book on writing titled, *Bird by Bird*, author Anne La Mott, tells us that one of the benefits of being a writer is that it allows you to pay attention to life. You pay attention to the things you see, the people you know, the incidents you encounter and you write about them. "[W]riting motivates you to look closely at life, at life as it lurches by and tramps around." (p. xii)

This is also the calling of the preacher. A preacher is to pay attention to life, as it lurches and passes by, and then point to it, make observations about it, and draw our attention to it as well. John the Baptist is the most obvious example of a preacher who stood by the side of life and made observations about it. But the observations of a preacher, unlike those of a writer, aren't thoughts that a person receives and ponders and makes little comments about, like, what nice alliteration or what an original simile.

Good preaching stops you in your tracks

The observations of a preacher don't give us that kind of leeway. John the Baptist didn't give people a lot of options. Good preachers don't. Good preachers observe life and comment on it in such a way as to make you stop, look up, and wonder why it is that you are doing what you are doing. Good preaching arrests. Good preaching stops you in your tracks and makes you look at things, often at things you don't want to look at, either because they are too foul and too painful, or because they are too holy and wonderful and your soul can't bear to be apart from them. These things can often happen in the same sermon.

Like writers, good preachers make these observations about life, but unlike writers, preachers are already bound to a Book. They have one Story and they are trying to tell it well, trying to take this one Story and make it seem new again.

What a strange thing

What a strange thing it is that we ask preachers to do for us. We pay them, remember, to do this. "Please," we ask, "come into our community and present to us, week in and week out, the Word of God. Open the Word to us and let it swirl around our heads and penetrate our hearts. Let it chasten us, inspire us, comfort us, convict us. Do this in our midst, as one of us, but set apart. Tell us things we've heard a hundred times before, tell us things we have never known, teach us things we have never understood."

And this person does. Every week he sits in his study, she sits in her office and reads the story again, wondering about it, looking at it with fresh

Chapter & Verse

Rev. Mary S. Hulst



eyes, digging out a concept that can be thrown on the wheel and formed into something resembling a sermon.

Apprentice to the Master

When she steps into the pulpit, hands muddy from the effort, the sermon may not stand upright, it may tilt a bit on an uneven bottom, or be stronger on one side than on the other. But week in and week out, the preacher presents the result of the labor, and week in, week out, the preacher does so as apprentice to the Master.

This is the most amazing thing about the craft of preaching: lumpy, uneven, unoriginal works thrown by tired hands are presented to the body of Christ and as they are, and the Master comes alongside and helps in the reception of the craft. This bulge sticks out just enough to attract one person's eye. The uneven bottom makes it shaky enough to keep another's attention. The crooked line of the work draws the eye of yet another to where it wouldn't have gone otherwise.

Unlike most writers, most preachers do not preach alone. And therein lies the strength. Therein lies the comfort.

For the preacher, the strength is in remembering that the lumpy works of the study can be smoothed out by the gentle work of the Spirit, both in the hours leading up to the preaching event and in the preaching event itself. And herein lies comfort.

Preachers do their absolute best, week in, week out, pouring themselves into their craft, trying each week to make an old story new, hauling their sometimes haggard souls into the pulpit, and there they are met.

They are met by the One who makes all things new. They are met by the One who takes tired words and makes them sing, who takes tired souls and helps them stand. They are met by the One who wrote the book. They are met by the One who tells the story. They are met by the One who is and who was and who is to come.

In the pulpit, the preacher is met.

And so are we all.

Thanks be to God.



Rev. Mary S. Hulst is pastor of East Avenue Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Critics were right

He said critics were right to compare the impact of NGOs to that of western missionaries in the 19th century, "not least because reliance on external resources allows them to promote western-defined solutions which cause social disruption on the ground."

Hanciles, who teaches mission history and globalization at Fuller, added that more than 100 years ago Christianity had become a "non-western religion" and that there were now seven times as many Anglicans in Nigeria as there were Episcopalians in the entire United States.

While the definitions of globalization vary, he said, it is already clear that the developing world's contribution to the process would be to re-export Christianity to the northern hemisphere. "The less well-noticed fact," he added, "is that the much-celebrated shifts in global Christianity have had little impact on the privileged position of the Western tradition within the theological curriculum."

He disagreed with claims that African Christianity — especially its neo-Pentecostal version — was

"made in America" and exported as part of a new fundamentalism. "Christianity has thrived in Africa because it lends itself to translation and takes on the garb of different cultures much more easily than, for instance, Islam, which comes with its own language, Arabic," he said.

He added that Christianity was spreading with far greater success in the Third World today than it had in the days of European missionaries. "Pentecostalism thrives because it taps into an innate African spirituality. Its phenomenal success on the African continent raises the question of whether Africa needs American ministries as much as American ministries need Africa," he said.

Hanciles said one of the ways in which the Third World would re-export Christianity to Europe would be through immigrant communities. "Christianity is a migratory religion and, throughout the centuries, migration movements have been a functional element in Christian expansion."

Mali Christians fear growth of persecution

MALI (Compass) — Muslim city authorities bought land and are building a mosque that would dominate a new suburb of Bamako, the Malian capital, and accommodate more than 2,000 Muslims for prayers, much to the distress of local Christians. The authorities had rejected the Christians' repeated requests for permission to build new churches. There is tremendous pressure on Mali to declare itself a Muslim state from Muslim states that surround Mali.

"There seems to be nothing we

can do against the tide of Islam," a church leader said. Some Christians are responding through prayer. One group met regularly and walked around the new mosque, reclaiming the land for Christ. To the dismay of the builders and architects, one of the large minarets fell down.

Another church helps Muslim converts. The senior pastor, Jean Pierre, comes across many cases of people who have been rejected by their families for converting to Christianity.

Opinion/Agriculture

Decoding Christian conduct: Why Christian institutions should avoid adopting 'codes of conduct'

John L. Hiemstra

The Supreme Court of Canada was correct to recognize Trinity Western University's right to use a Christian Code of Conduct in its day-to-day affairs. Faith-based institutions must have the right to discriminate when their actions directly reflect their bone fide aims. But are Christian schools, social agencies, universities, unions and other institutions correct to rush headlong into adopting codes of conduct to protect their Christian identities?

Three major reasons are given to support this strategy: codes of conduct are the biblical way of dealing with morality, they help maintain constituency support, and they promise to function as a legal insurance tool for Christian institutions that want to fire an employee for moral misconduct.

Unbiblical conduct

Only a minority of Christians think codes of conduct are a wise strategy for encouraging genuine Christian behavior. Jesus affirmed the Ten Commandments but he also rebuked the Pharisees for enforcing behavioral codes while failing to honor God in their hearts. Codes promote unhealthy legalistic attitudes. True Christian conduct flows from a genuine heart commitment, not external coercion. Jesus taught that the law hangs together in the great command to love God above all and our neighbor as ourselves.

Codes of conduct also promote an unbiblical hierarchy of sins. They tend to condemn a select range of sins, e.g. sexual, while overlooking sins that are harder to define and perhaps more common among Christians, e.g. pride, gluttony, intolerance, greed, and selfishness.

Codes also promote rigid standards. While conduct is a crucial part of a biblical way of life, we know that moral behavior is often very complex and occurs in such complicated contexts that it must be dealt with on a case-by-case basis in order to be truly pastoral. Jesus defined and modelled a pastoral approach in his relationships with greedy tax collectors, promiscuous prostitutes, hypocritical Pharisees, and his own status-seeking disciples.

Constituency support

In spite of these types of objections, many Christian institutions still adopt codes of conduct to maintain constituency support. While this is a valid concern, it is a flawed strategy.

Using a code of conduct to define an institution's relationship with supporters tends to reduce its Christian character to morality. The Bible, however, speaks to a lot more than moral conduct. The Christian character of an institution is also founded in its understanding of the meaning and destiny of history, the nature of humanity, the structure of creation, the character and scope of sin, and the scope of salvation. Christian identity must exceed morality. Furthermore, the Bible also goes beyond individualism. It addresses the communal and institutional sins of entire peoples, e.g. Israel, the Babylonian Empire, or a local church community. The church must do the same today.

Christian institutions need to nurture a vital and dynamic relationship with their supporting communities in order to maintain strong support. Since codes of conduct are weak ways of dealing with immorality, Christian institutions and their supporting communities owe it to one another to develop wise alternatives. Institutions can take the initiative by modelling more biblical means of dealing with internal immorality.

Co-opted by modernity

Many Christian institutions fear that the secularism dominating our legal system will make it impossible to fire employees who undermine their identity and mission through unbiblical moral conduct. This line of reasoning was bolstered by Trinity's recent Supreme Court victory. My own institution is currently seeking to adopt a code of conduct after years of deliberation in the wake of the Supreme Court's Vriend decision.

I believe adopting codes of conduct as a means to co-exist within a secularist and sometimes hostile culture is an unwise strategy. The real problem Christian institutions should address is that our secularist, liberal culture has chosen to deal with human rights in an almost exclusively individualistic manner. Rights are possible only for individual persons, not institutions or associations. Christian institutions are forced therefore to adjust to individualistic standards. The individual rights of employees supersede, in all cases, legitimate protections for the religious identity of institutions. The dominant culture will only tolerate violations of individual rights in exceptional circumstances, and then only if an institution does so by adopting an individualistic, moralistic, and legalistic code of conduct.

Why would liberalism celebrate freedom while simultaneously coercing religious institutions to adopt codes of conduct? At heart, liberalism believes it is universal and includes all but in fact it

ignores minority religions and cultures and ultimately assimilates them into its universal framework. This framework is not neutral, however, since it merely reflects the particular ideology of the

liberal majority.

Christians must resist the liberal pressure to think individualistically, define identity moralistically, and deal with behavior

Continued on page 11...

Farm holiday with coyotes

COUNTRY COUNTERCULTURE

VERN M. GLEDDIE

Life on the farm is one big holiday so why go away? I half-jokingly suggested this to my wife, who half-believes me. I recommended an on-farm holiday. It would require rising 4:30 a.m. (3:30 if we weren't using "daylight saving time" which city people invented to fool themselves into getting up early) to experience creation's waking hours, and as a bonus we might bag a killer coyote.

Coyotes have been preying on our lambs again, so I have been out early, concealed in the trees guarding the sheep. From there I have a full view of the pasture, but also a vista extending miles over rolling hills into the Sturgeon River valley.

Eden-like morning

One morning in particular unfolded like Eden. Skies were clear but a heavy mist rolled in over a distant embankment and poured down into the valleys. The mist ebbed and flowed, sometimes rising to the hilltops and then receding. The scent of spruce perfumed the air. Birds heralded the rising of the sun. A raven's call completed the sudden feeling of camping in the mountains. Spoiling the idyllic scene was the fact I stood within gun range of a lamb carcass coyotes had left the day before.

Earlier that morning, while lying in bed telling myself to get up, I'd heard a commotion of disturbed sheep in the pasture. When I arrived on the scene, two coyotes were beginning a breakfast of prime lamb. I was able to get a shot away at each coyote but missed both targets. Neither coyote was fazed by whizzing bullets and they merely trotted off to lie down in a neighboring field.

Coyotes in the mist

I recognized the coyotes. They had been part of a trio that I had caught feeding on a fresh kill earlier in the week. I have learned, or maybe it is second nature, to identify animals by distinguishing features. The sheep, for instance, all look the same to visitors, but I see a great variety. One coyote I didn't have to remember because the trio became a duet when I dispatched him where I caught him red-handed, so to speak. Remaining were a very large male (obvious by his size and behavior) who had lost all his winter hair and a smaller animal still carrying a winter coat.

Now, standing stock-still in the trees on the morning of Eden, I spotted some movement. First,

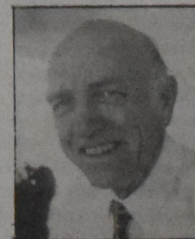
a fox trotted down the tree line, passing near me and jumping sideways as he caught my scent. Then the cows appeared from their bed-ground, hoving up through the mist here and there as they moved out to graze.

It began to look as though the mist would prevent me from seeing a predator, because I could no longer see the place where the dead lamb lay. Soon the sheep would arrive and a coyote could kill again under cover. The fog thinned though, enough for a shadowy figure to show near the lamb carcass, but not clear enough to see well through the gun scope. For reasons unknown, the coyote trotted towards me, and that proved fatal for him. So much for the Eden picture—a coyote and a lamb cannot lie down together.



ALAN G. NELSON, ANIMALS, ANIMALS

My wife has not yet tried my farm holiday suggestion — not even without the hunting part. Perhaps it was enough for her that it was rejuvenating for me to be there and also to know an enemy is gone. The lamb killing has stopped. For those of you who cringe at the dark side of this story, coyotes still howl up and down the river valley at night.



Vern Gleddie has a sheep ranch near Edmonton, Alta.

Reflection

Surprise!

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

Years ago when my son Jason was seven years old, he plopped down on a kitchen chair before school looking glum.

I asked, "What's wrong?"

"Someone in Grade Four said I'm ugly!" he cried. Tears rolled down his cheeks.

"That's terrible!" I exclaimed. As I consoled him, I said I'd write a note explaining the situation to his teacher.

When I'd almost completed writing the note, Jason suddenly piped up in an astonished voice, "I think I dreamt it!" With that realization he wiped away his tears and went happily off to school. I tore up the note, incredulous, yet delighted at the turn of events.

Surprises! Our lives are full of them. That's not amazing considering that our Creator is a God of surprises. Jesus' birth gives evidence of that. As Philip Yancey says in *The Jesus I Never Knew*, "Unimaginably, the Maker of all things shrank down, down, down, so small as to become an ovum, a single fertilized egg barely visible to the naked eye, an egg that would divide and redivide until a fetus took shape, enlarging cell by cell in a nervous teenager."

And consider Jesus' resurrection. Without that biggest wonder of all — death conquered by Life — we would not be who we are, redeemed, hope-filled parents and children.

Have you noticed the surprising ways God has worked in your family?



MICHAEL BUSSELLE & JOHN FREEMAN

It's also remarkable how God enkindles love in our kids' hearts.

I have in mine.

Take the astonishing way he nurtures faith in our children's hearts. Parents can give their children what they need — food, shelter, love, education, religious training — but they can't give them faith. Tamara, then four, said to me, "Do you know who has the gooddest ears, Mom?"

I asked, "Who does?"

She answered, "God! Because you can't hear me when I talk soft, but God can."

Though we teach our children that God is always near them, only he can touch their hearts so they believe that he hears their voices and can save them.

It's also remarkable how God enkindles love in our kids' hearts. After all, they struggle with sin — selfishness, greed, and the desire to be number one — just as parents do. When six-year-old Tamara had a sore finger, her younger brother,

Benjamin, hugged her, with his piggy bank in hand. "I want to give Tamara a penny so she'll feel better," he said. I helped him shake out some money. He took a quarter and gave it to her. Though Tamara said her finger would soon be better, Benjamin insisted she keep the quarter. Parents smile at such endearing scenes. But they are more than just cute episodes. They are evidence of how God infuses our children's hearts with love.

God provides for our families' material needs in astounding ways. Years before I became pregnant with our fifth child, I gave away everything I owned that pertained to babies. How could I afford to buy everything I needed for the new baby? I worried. But God taught me that worrying was a waste of time! Through different means and people, he provided abundantly, so much that I could not use all I had received. So, I had the pleasure of passing the surplus on to others.

Probably the most humbling surprise is how God uses sinful, but redeemed parents to role model his character — love, compassion, mercy, and justice — to their children. One night when Benjamin was two years old, I prayed with him, and said, "Thank you, God, for taking care of Benjamin."

Before I could say amen, Benjamin responded vehemently, "God no take care of me! You take care of me!" Because he could see my husband and me, touch us, cry or laugh with us, and feel our embrace, we were, despite our imperfections, Exhibit A: Reflections of a Heavenly Father.

Our children permeate our lives with surprises, and we often laugh out loud with delight when we experience them together.

Children make surprising discoveries. Once when two-year-old Benjamin was lying on my lap, looking up at me, he said incredulously, "You have hairs in your nose, Mommy." What an amazing finding for a child who hadn't seen the world from that perspective before!

Kids say surprising things at inopportune times. On visits to my husband Rinke's two elderly aunts we always tried to keep our rambunctious children calm in their immaculate apartment decorated with valuable antiques. During one visit Jason leaned over on an old chair and looked at the bottom of the seat. Suddenly, he interrupted our conversation and innocently said, "Daddy, why does it say 'Rinke and Sonya' under this chair?"

Rinke and I exchanged embarrassed glances. How surprised we were to discover the gift earmarked for us after his aunts' deaths!

Children experience surprising events. A newborn robin fell out of its nest in a maple tree above a sidewalk and landed safely on my eleven-year-old daughter's shoulder. Rachel set the bird on the sidewalk. A few moments later the mother robin joined it. Rachel was in the right place at the right time, and probably saved the bird's life.

When we become aware of God's surprise-saturated world, something happens to us and our children. Our praise and thanksgiving to God intensify. We delight more in life.

We are filled with hope because we know that God, who surprised his people with a Bethlehem birth and a Jerusalem resurrection, has an even greater surprise waiting for us and our children: a New Jerusalem eternity with him.

Keep your eyes and ears open! The next surprise is just around the corner!

Decoding Christian conduct

... continued from page 10
problems legally. Christian institutions need a counter-cultural strategy that allows them to deal with internal moral issues in a pastoral manner while simultaneously defending themselves against unwarranted legal action. This strategy could involve three components:

(1) Faith-based institutions should articulate an internal process and procedure for dealing with moral issues among employees.

(2) Each Christian institution should enumerate the biblical thrust that it believes should direct human life and which it will use to

deliberate on difficult issues, including future moral cases.

(3) Together, faith-based institutions should devise a broad inter-institutional strategy for gradually reforming the way our culture deals with individual rights so that it also protects valid minority institutional rights. Christian institutions should do so in coalition with other faith-based institutions — not only with evangelical, mainline, and Catholic institutions, but also with Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, and Hindu institutions — that also want to escape the imposition of the dominant, secular, individualistic approach to morality. These faith-based institutions

should agree to support one another in court cases that they may face as a result of these issues. This interfaith approach is important to show that Christians want public justice for all, not simply a legal

framework biased towards Christians.

John L. Hiemstra is associate professor of political studies at The King's University College.



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Sports

The summer the Olympics came to our farm

Ron de Boer

Okay, it's old news, but Toronto won't be playing host to the 2008 Olympics. The debate, of course, centres around whether or not this is a good thing. Social activists think the money should be spent on homeless people and education; athletes and businesses would prefer the world's spotlights in our own back yard because the attention tends to bring in large amounts of cash. I can see both sides. But, for me, losing the Olympics deprives our kids the opportunity to be imaginative.

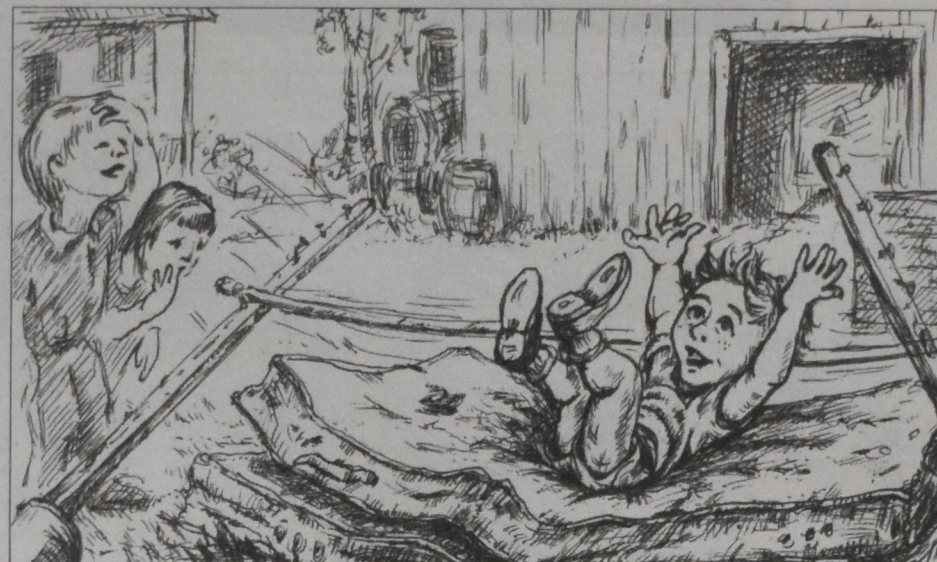
One day I was a Polish shot putter, the next I was a Kenyan marathoner.

Let me explain. Twenty-five years ago, the 21st Olympiad came to Montreal. CBC television broadcasted the summer games for the very first time, and also for the first time, many Canadians witnessed the spirit of global competition. I was eleven years old when the Montreal Olympics flickered onto the set of my uncle Gerry and aunt Mien's TV set. My brother and I had been sent to my uncle and aunt's house for three weeks while my parents — post-war child immigrants — revisited their relatives in the old country for the first time.

Slugging bales, lugging pails

After seeing them off on their KLM Boeing 747 at Toronto airport, my uncle whisked us off to the gravel roads of Allenford, Ontario and introduced us to the dairy operation. Lucky for us, it was still haying season, and my brother, Doug, and I got to slug bales all day with our cousin. At night, without even asking, we were invited to come down to the barn and see what it was like to lug pails of milk to the milk-house. Isn't this fun, my aunt smiled. Since we didn't want to be sent packing with our handkerchiefs tied up at the ends of our sticks, we said it was great fun. And can we do it from dawn til dusk again tomorrow? And you thought the Chinese had human rights problems.

The child labor demands decreased during week two as haying season came to an end. Doug and I began to hang around the house in the long hot afternoons. Every day after lunch, my aunt watched her daily *Guiding Light* episode (that we got hooked on this soap opera is another story!) and afterwards, we



HARRY DER NEDERLANDEN ILLUSTRATIONS (3)

were allowed to watch CBC's coverage of the Olympics. We were mesmerized by the athleticism of the runners and jumpers of all nationalities. Finally, we understood that song, "red, brown, yellow, black and white, they are precious...."

Words like *steeplechase* and *decathlon* became part of our every day language. We imitated Greg Joy, our Canadian high jumper — who lost the gold medal to that American Goliath Dwight Stones — by doing the Fosbury Flop on my cousin Shirley's bed. However, my brother's gold medal jump splayed out the bed's legs like a Romanian gymnast and we were forbidden any more jumping. We didn't tell my aunt we were planning a pole vaulting session on their bed.

Dreaming Olympic gold

Over the next two weeks, we dreamed Olympic gold. We ran around the barn three times and raised our arms in victory near the manure pile. We took turns wrestling on the front lawn, arguing over who would be the Bulgarian and who would be the Canadian. One day I was a Polish shot putter,

the next I was a Kenyan marathoner. We, of course, had no idea that the 1976 Olympics were disastrous for Canada. Not only did the city of Montreal lose millions of dollars, but Canada is known today as the only host country ever to go without winning a gold medal.

None of that mattered to Doug

and I. Our imaginations had been twirling since the flags marched into Olympic Stadium during opening ceremonies.

Soon, my parents stumbled off the KLM Jumbo Jet bearing gifts for my brothers and I. I got a pair of wooden shoes filled with *dropjes*. After trying to look interested in all the pictures of my parents flanked

by every cigarette-smoking Hollander relative imaginable, we snuck out to the driving shed and began gathering materials for our own Olympics. We'd been discussing it for weeks, and when we were convinced we could build enough venues between the house and the barn, we practised our pitch to my mother, the Juan Antonio Samarach of the family. We needed her vote or our Olympic bid would have to wait for another summer, which to us may as well been four years.

The 1st DeBoer Olympiad

We told her we would be inviting the whole gang — that meant Dave, Gord, Wade and Edwin — including the Wilson brothers from Keady. The Wilsons lived in the back of the Keady General Store. The Wilsons were the

adolescent equivalent of the Russians at the real Olympics. Nobody liked them much but they were good athletes, so we feared them — after all, my brother and I imagined we'd be winning all the events. For some reason, my mother always felt sorry for the Wilson kids, and whenever we included them in something, we were rewarded. Our reward this day was the 1st DeBoer Olympiad. Which, of course, was our plan.

After inviting everyone to the day-long Olympic competition, Doug and I set to creating the medals. Ours had to be square because the saw would only cut the wood in lines. My mother — who always supported us with our imaginative endeavors — purchased gold, silver, and bronze spray paint — to transform the wood into decorations of glory. We drilled holes in the top and strung yellow rope through for the medal ceremony.

Then we created the various pavilions. The High Jump Pavilion was constructed near the rusty swing set. We took two 2x4s from the barn, hammered nails one inch apart into each to hold up the bamboo pole, then cemented the 2x4s into the holes we had dug. My mother allowed us to drag out of the attic four dusty cot-mattresses for our landing mat. She said she'd been saving them for just such a day.

The hay-field beside the barn was our running track. We fired up the lawn-mower and cut a four lane swath into the clover. From the top of the silo it didn't really look all that oval; it appeared more like the effort of someone attempting to bend a coat hanger into a circle. But from ground level, it could very well have been mistaken for Olympic Stadium in Montreal. A row of lawn chairs for the parents, and the stadium was complete.

The stairs leading up to the side of our farmhouse served as the medal podium. The gold medal winner stood at the top by the screen door while the others — silver and bronze — stood every two steps. The non-winners sang the national anthem of the gold medal winner's chosen country, which was always Canada, of course, with the exception of discus (Frisbee) gold medal winner, Gord, who insisted he was from Nigeria. We had to make up a national-anthem sounding song, the finished product of which contained a lot of "na-na-naaas" and "um-um-uums" and which was punctuated by a lone drum-beat, provided by the bronze medal winner, Larry, who had taken off his shoes and



Sports



was banging them together rhythmically.

Opening ceremonies in horseshoe pit

Finally, the day arrived. Mrs. Wilson dropped off the Wilsons — Dave, Everett and Larry — while the others biked over from their various farms. Wade was the only city slicker in the bunch as he lived in the Keady trailer park. After a snack of honey bread and freshie in Olympic village (the kitchen), we marched through the wood-shed to the venue where the opening ceremonies were to be held (the horseshoe pit).

After a few words by Games organizers — me — (“no throwing rocks at the cows, no leaping over flower beds”), the high jump competition began. There were three winners, for all three jumped the highest nail we had hammered into the 2x4s. Gord pulled out of competition, as he was allergic to the dusty mattresses. An argument ensued over who should get the gold and who should get the silver and bronze since we had created exactly enough medals. Insults were exchanged and Edwin threatened to boycott the Games if Everett kept being so bossy. My brother, ever the peacemaker, volunteered to take the silver and, grudgingly, I accepted the bronze which left a beaming Larry standing by the screen door while we belted out the first of what would prove to be many renditions of “O Canada.”

As the afternoon wore on, only three medals remained and one event had yet to be conquered: the Marathon. We had planned for ten laps around the field. If you didn't finish the ten laps, you couldn't claim a medal. As it was, only five

of us were left. Edwin had been summoned home to cut the grass; Gord, who had eaten probably 30 green apples, was complaining of a sore stomach, and Dave had wandered off with my older brother, who had enticed him with the news he had bought a new Journey album.

I had planned to shoot the starter's pistol — my other brother's pellet gun — and announce the race. That left the Wilsons, Doug, and Wade. That soon became just Doug and Wade when a cloud of dust suddenly made its way down the driveway, collected the three Wilsons and raced back up the laneway.

Doug dropped out after a lap, leaving Wade huffing and puffing around the track. At one point, around lap 6, he begged to quit but we wouldn't let him. To win gold, he had to finish the race. Around lap 8, we began to notice it. The color in Wade's face had gone from red and sweating to a sort of second-cut greenish hue. On lap 9, Wade got the bright idea that he could walk. He hadn't seen anything in the rules about not being able to walk. On the final lap, Wade disappeared.

'You're almost there'

He simply fell forward into the hayfield. Doug and I sprinted to the spot where Wade was sprawled and groaning. “Come on, Wade,” we encouraged. “You're almost there. Get up.” But Wade wasn't about to get up. In fact, Wade had to be brought back to his trailer in the back of my parents' big green Buick. My mother mentioned something about sun-stroke; my father suggested heat exhaustion.

After a brief meeting and vote,

we decided to grant Wade the gold medal, his only medal of the games. He clutched it proudly as it hung around his neck and smiled weakly at us through the dusty window of the Buick. I think there were tears in his eyes. Soon everyone else slouched off homeward as well.

And so the 1st — and last — DeBoer Olympiad drew to a close. Tired, we cleaned up the aftermath and, of course, embellished the tale for years. Wade had nearly died. Larry could have cleared the bar on the swing set that day. Gord's little brother probably could have beaten Edwin in the 100-yard-dash — I mean, who would show up to the Olympics in his rubber boots! It had to have been 115 degrees that day!

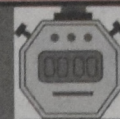
The Chinese Olympics

The year 2008 marks the first ever Olympics in China, the world's largest country. Chinese kids will see the rest of the world; the rest of the world will come into China. And perhaps the repression and abuse of human rights Chinese kids have known their whole lives will begin to erode. Perhaps imagination and religious freedom and education for all will become the norm as China embraces an Olympic Games that will include countries steeped in democracy and political and religious freedom.

For these reasons, I'm glad Beijing got the games. Somewhere, near some rice paddy in rural China, a bunch of kids will grab some sticks and outline a track. They'll gather their friends and they'll run, jump and throw. And they will begin to understand a world beyond the fields and fence-lines of their own country.

After the Buzzer

Tim Antonides



Playing around

I'm a Dutch boy raised with a Dutch work ethic. In our house, the sin of laziness was right up there with adultery. One problem with this is that it's taken me quite a while to get over the stigma that teachers get for having summers off. I used to feel guilty from the jealous comments of the 49-weeks-a-year crowd. Now I just laugh and pack up the golf clubs for another round.

In my heart, I still rage at laziness, though. That's why tennis bothers me. I love playing and watching it, but, let's face it, tennis (at the professional level) is a sport soaked with luxury and lazy posers. The players get chairs placed at courtside for them, other people pick up the balls for them, and they get bottled water served in their seats. If it's too hot, there are people to hold umbrellas over them while they towel off. In the average men's grass-court match, the ball is only in play for about four minutes an hour. Except for golf, there is no other sport where people with such a low standard of fitness can make so much money for doing so little. The latest edition of Wimbledon made this painfully obvious.

Lots of 'coasters' in tennis

Andre Agassi is still one of the greatest tennis players of all time. Despite a distinct lack of ability, he's a workhorse. He had several five-set matches during Wimbledon this year, and he barely broke a sweat. Brad Gilbert, his coach, commented this year that Wimbledon has a lot of “coasters” — lazy, unfit big-hit wonders. There was no bigger example of this than Goran Ivanisevic, a chronically inconsistent and lethargic player who fell to No. 125 this year but who made it to Wimbledon almost singly on his serve. What a shame.

It's easy to see why professional tennis has a hard time keeping people's interest. People can tell that a lot of players out there haven't done the work. Fans hold a special place of contempt in their hearts for undeserving, uncommitted athletes. Tennis is a personality-driven sport. When the public perceives that it's being played by horrendously overpaid, lazy teenagers, they will react accordingly.

Remembering Jimmy Connors

When I watched Wimbledon this year, I thought back to the days of Jimmy Connors and Chris Evert. Both of them played to the death. The crowds loved to watch Connors especially. He had a tremendous amount of heart and worked incredibly hard. He wasn't even that terribly gifted as an athlete but it didn't matter. There is almost nobody like that anymore. With the exceptions of Agassi, Jennifer Capriati, and Venus Williams, tennis is pretty much devoid of physically fit athletes.

One of the things I love most about sports is that in general hard work and patience are rewarded. To make it to the big show, athletes have to put in years of practice and invest a huge physical and personal effort towards one goal. Most of them fail and don't reach the professional level, but the process is so incredibly important.

Sometimes I resent how much effort I put into things that don't work out. Most of us do — whether it's a failed relationship, a career choice that doesn't pan out, or a loser investment. Yet, we do have a God who rewards us for hard work. Maybe not always in a strictly monetary or prestigious sense, but in a way that leads to self-discovery and a heightened sense of our talents and limitations.

Yes, this is easy for a pipsqueak teacher like me to say. But it's true.

Even at Wimbledon.



Tim Antonides teaches Grade 8 and is a basketball coach at Surrey Christian School in Surrey, B.C.

Society

Religious affiliation little help in stemming suicide among elderly

Rita Robinson

Worldwide, as the elderly population grows, health professionals are taking a hard look at a subject that has long bothered those involved in suicide prevention: the elderly, especially men, commit suicide at rates far higher than the general population.

It's not only a problem for societies as a whole, but possibly for religious bodies, since church members commit suicide equal to that of non-churchgoers, and in some cases, in more religiously Orthodox countries, the suicide rates among the elderly are higher still.

The International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry reported last year that elderly people in Catholic and Orthodox countries are more likely to commit suicide than those in secular and Protestant countries, with Italy, Spain and Portugal sustaining higher suicide rates than the United Kingdom, the United States or Canada. But that's only one of hundreds of studies on a subject little discussed by religious bodies throughout the world.

Reluctance to bring suicide out of closet

The reluctance to bring suicide out of the closet doesn't prevent those over 55 in the U.S. and Canada (as well as the rest of the world), from committing suicide in record numbers. However, a few studies show that if the elderly remain active and involved in

church, it can minimally decrease suicide. Alan L. Berman, PhD, Executive Director, American Association of Suicidology, says that an attachment to a religious institution, with its rituals and systems of religion can give someone a sense of self, value and purpose.

Housebound vulnerable

Once elderly people become housebound, though, and have little contact with the church, even if they have been active previously, they become more vulnerable.

This is in keeping with the idea behind much of the research which shows that loneliness, particularly when one loses a spouse, is a major cause of depression and suicide among the elderly.

Although suicide is more than numbers and statistics, not only among the elderly, but among all people, a few statistics might help place suicide in perspective. The average rate of suicide for all ages and genders in Canada is 12.3 per hundred thousand population, with males more than four times as likely than females to commit suicide. Add to that men over 75 who are nearly twice as likely to commit suicide than their younger male counterparts, at 27.0 per hundred thousand. Figures for the United States are slightly higher.

Steven E. Hyman, MD, Director of the National Institute of Mental Health in the U.S.A., has said that depression, often caused

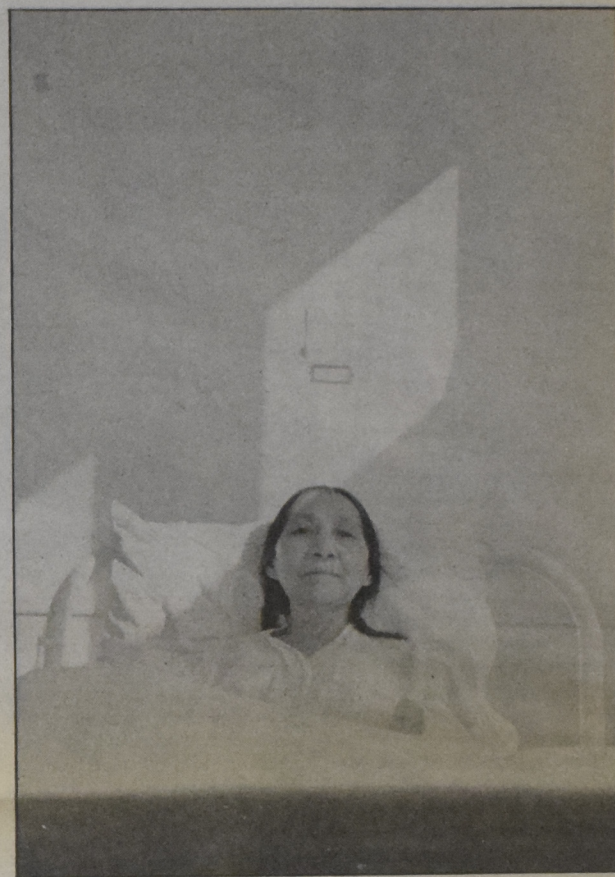
by loneliness, is frequently obscured by symptoms of physical illness, and therefore isn't treated the same as it is with younger populations. Hyman pointed out that studies from the U.S.A., Finland, Sweden, and Britain, all find that 90 per cent of people who kill themselves suffer from depression or another diagnosable mental or substance abuse disorder. Other contributing factors, often linked to mental disorders and depression, can be stress, obesity in women, genetic predispositions, abusive childhoods, anger, physical illness, traumatic events, such as divorce, incarceration, low in dependency on others, aggression, and mental and physical pain.

Multi-faceted problem

Suicide among the elderly is a multi-faceted problem, but physical illness, as has been thought by many, isn't a major cause of suicide among the elderly. Less than five per cent of elderly suicide victims have been diagnosed with a terminal illness, such as cancer, at the time of their death. Two-thirds of victims are in relatively good physical health. Still, many older persons deal with other illnesses, such as heart conditions, which physiologically can cause depression, according to studies at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis.

Some believe that the only way to prevent suicide is to improve the quality of life, but experts point out that "quality of life" is a subjective thing. We see people who appear to be on top of the world, with seemingly happy families, they are well employed, and they kill themselves. Then others, who seemingly have nothing, and who might be living on the streets under the worst of conditions put up a strong fight for life.

A sense of purpose has been cited as a detriment to depression, which can lead to suicide. Ironically, the poverty in some non-industrialized countries offers protection from high suicide rates among the elderly. When wealth replaces poverty, lifestyles change and suicide rates go up, because the old are no longer as valued as they once were. "It's a matter of feeling useless, worn out and isolated," says Richard J. Seiden, former professor of behavioral sciences at the University of California at Berkeley, Calif. He points out that even elderly in minority communities in the U.S.A. fare better, and experience lower suicide rates than more affluent communities, since lower income families often don't have the money to hire help to take care of



YOUSUF KARSHI

the children while both parents work. Grandma, and often grandpa, step in to help out with the children.

Depression chronic, contagious

Barry D. Lebowitz, chief of the Adult and Geriatric Treatment and Preventive Interventions Research Branch of the National Institute of Mental Health, U.S.A., says that depression is chronic, and causes suffering and disability the same as diabetes, arthritis and other illnesses common to older people. Also it is contagious, since depression changes the mood around the entire household to one of depression, and affects others who live there.

Part of the problem is that the elderly were not raised at a time when seeking psychological help was accepted. Yet, depression is a chemical process that can be treated so that they can live quality lives. Too often, though, the clergy are reluctant to recommend that an elderly person seek help from mental health professionals.

So while studies show that professional treatment can stem depression that leads to suicide, and involvement in the church can sometimes ease loneliness and foster self-worth, as the author of a

book for survivors of suicide, I often find myself arguing for the suicide victim in the face of ignorance, which too often comes from those active in churches.

I once read a letter to the editor in a local newspaper in response to an article about a woman with Alzheimer's who had committed suicide. The victim was living with her daughter's family, and it was they who had for years been caring for her. They were devastated. The woman writing the letter in response to the article, however, who claimed to be a Christian, said that if the family had taken better care of the woman, watched over her better, she wouldn't have committed suicide.

Enraged at insensitivity

I was enraged at the insensitivity of the woman who wrote the letter to the editor. Obviously, she had no awareness of the mental states of some Alzheimer's patients, or what it takes to care for the person. Not all Alzheimer's patients are subdued, and simply forgetful. Many become quite violent toward others and themselves.

In another instance, a woman adamantly said that her church believes those who commit suicide are selfish, and doomed to hell...

See CHURCHES page 15...

Sources that might be useful to readers include:

Suicide Information and Education Centre (siec@siec.ca)
201-1615 10th Ave. SW, Calgary, AB T3C 0J7 Canada
Phone: 403-245-3900, Fax: 403-245-0299 www.siec.ca/

Largest English language suicide information resource centre and library in the world. <http://www.suicideinfo.ca/siec.htm>

American Association of Suicidology, 4201 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 408, Washington DC 20008
Phone: 202-237-2280, Fax: 202-237-2282 www.suicidology.org/

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, 120 Wall St., 22nd Fl., New York NY 10005 Phone: 888-357-2377,
Fax: 212-363-6237 www.afsp.org

International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP), Central Administrative Office, Rush Presbyterian, St. Luke's Medical Center, Rush University, 1725 West Harrison Street, Suite 955, Chicago, IL, 60612-3824 IASP@aol.com

World Health Organization http://www.who.int/mental_health/Suicide/

Rita Robinson, P.O. Box 2917, Big Bear City CA 92314-2917
Phone: 909-585-1801 ritarobn@gte.net

Profile/Society

Author Philip Yancey: writing as pilgrimage

Michael Ireland, with Mark Ellis

SAN DIEGO, California (ANS) — Philip Yancey serves as editor-at-large for *Christianity Today*. His books *The Jesus I Never Knew* and *What's So Amazing About Grace?* were national bestsellers. Yancey has written eight Gold Medallion Award-winning books, including *Where is God When it Hurts? Disappointment with God*, and *The Gift of Pain*. ASSIST News Service reporters Michael Ireland and Mark Ellis met with Yancey at the recent Evangelical Press Association convention in San Diego, Ca.

Philip Yancey confounds stereotypes about himself or his faith. A self-described "child of the Sixties," his Afro hairstyle, wire-rimmed glasses, and willowy frame, set off by a yellow tie and blue shirt remind you of Sergeant Pepper, not a voice speaking for Christendom. Self-deprecating, humorous, and soft-spoken, he sees himself as a fellow sojourner on the path of Christian experience, not one of its leading voices.

Voice of a pilgrim

"I'm carving out a trail," Yancey says. "My voice is the voice of a pilgrim, trying to figure out the Christian life," he says. "I'm writing about my own struggles."

Yancey believes the message of



Philip Yancey

the church, at least in the West, has been corrupted by a Madison Avenue style ethos. "Evangelicals are a lot better marketers than Jesus was," Yancey said. "Jesus never promised God is going to solve your problems," he said. Yancey often finds himself speaking for those who have been wounded by life — and their

church experience.

"We should not be making it worse for Christians who are disappointed," he said. Yancey's desire to be a voice for those who are disappointed in life may spring from his own discontented church experience as a young man. "I was raised in a church that was not honest," he said. While hesitating to describe the church of his youth as a cult, or to identify it, he does point to its aberrant theology, particularly regarding racial issues.

Yancey believes the church particularly lost its way in the political and social arena. "It's easy to lose sight of our mission," Yancey said. "We are not to clean up the world," he says. "Jesus didn't try to clean up the Roman Empire."

Stern judge vs. physician

Instead, Yancey sees the mission of the church in a mixture of metaphorical terms. "We are to be a light on a hill and attract them by appealing to their thirst," he said. "Sinners were attracted to Jesus," Yancey says. "They saw him as a place of healing."

"When I grew up, my view of

God was a stern judge. Now I see him as a physician."

The social gospel is not completely discounted by the author. "We have to be involved in social issues," Yancey says. "It's a tricky balance," he said. "Christians get very angry about those whose sins are different than their own." Yancey admits his own struggle with self-righteousness or pride may be as serious as some of the sins being fought over in protest marches.

"My books are an expression of my groping. I'm just a sinner who's found grace."

Carving out a new trail

In his recent book *Reaching for the Invisible God* (Zondervan, 2000), Yancey uses the image of a jungle explorer "with a machete hacking through the jungle."

"When I'm doing the writing myself I feel like I'm carving out a new trail and there's no trail there," said Yancey.

"I deliberately choose hard topics that I don't know the answer to, that I don't have the resolution to, because it's a wonderful privilege, really, to spend a couple of years trying to figure something out. And if I already knew the answers when I started I'd be very bored, very quickly. So, when I wrote *The Jesus I Never Knew*, I taught a class on Jesus, I'd learned a lot, then I decided, 'I've read a lot of books about Jesus, but none of

them really portrays the Jesus that I know. So I'd like to write that.' It's a very different book than the Jesus I grew up with, and it always surprises me once I've carved that path through the jungle to turn around and see that other people are coming down the same path, because I'm not aware of them as I'm writing."

"You know, the only feedback a book writer gets is when it's too late to help. You get responses to the published material. So, it is an exploration, it is a journey, and I think increasingly I've learned that my 'proper voice' is the voice of a pilgrim representing the ordinary person in the pew trying to figure out this strange, mysterious, difficult, Christian life," he said.

Is your target audience people who have similar questions to your own?

"To tell you the truth, I don't think I have a target audience. I certainly did when I was a magazine editor (at *Campus Life*). But nowadays, I'm writing about my own questions and struggles. The people I tend to hear from are people who are either wounded by the church, disaffected Christians, or suspicious of institutional Christianity. And I think they respond to my own suspicions, my own honesty about the propaganda that doesn't always turn out to be true. And so I gain some trust from them by being just very honest."

See YANCEY page 16...

Churches have changing views of suicide

... continued from page 14

and that's what she, too, believes. She restated her views, even after hearing about scientific studies throughout the world that show the majority of suicide victims suffer from mental conditions such as bipolar disorder or schizophrenia, and also severe depression, all of which alters brain chemicals that if left untreated can lead to suicide. Such changes can be seen on brain scans of depressed individuals. And autopsies following suicide show changes in brain chemicals.

A good portion of the clergy of all faiths are knowledgeable about the medical findings, and recognize that a suicidal person is not rational, and therefore, not accountable for his or her actions. But many churches still cling to unrealistic, and non-enlightened beliefs about suicide.

Some, like former Presbyterian minister Covell Hart of California, recalls that when he attempted suicide several years ago when his

first wife asked for a divorce, his church offered very little support, so he changed affiliations, and served happily and effectively as a clergyman for many more years after receiving the help he needed.

Ambiguous view of suicide

Hart, along with many religious leaders acknowledge that within the church, no serious discussion of suicide takes place, and that the clergy skirts the hard issues of just what the act implies for the person who commits suicide. Many traditional churches neither condone or condemn suicide. And how could they do otherwise given the history of suicide and the church, which is ambiguous at best, since there appears to be no religious sanctions attached to suicide in the Old Testament. Also, less than 10 instances of individual suicide are found in the Old Testament. It wasn't until the fifth century that the Christian Church, at the time of St. Augustine, began clamping

down on suicide, which, in some periods of Judeo-Christian history, had been acceptable, even praised.

Louis Dublin, author of *Suicide: A Sociological and Statistical Study*. Ronald Press Co.; New York; 1963, considered one of the pioneers in suicide studies, writes that, "The early Christians apparently accepted the prevailing attitudes of their time on suicide, particularly when persecution made life unbearable for them. The Apostles did not denounce suicide; the New Testament touched on the question only indirectly, and for several centuries the leaders of the Church did not condemn the practice, which apparently was rather common."

A sin and a crime

St. Augustine was the first to denounce suicide as a crime. By the time of Thomas Aquinas (the thirteenth century), suicide was considered not only a sin, but a crime as well.

This attitude prevailed throughout the Middle Ages and persisted until about the nineteenth century in England, and in some communities lasted into the twentieth century.

During the Middle Ages the corpse was often mutilated, and up until the nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries suicides were denied Christian burial, the body was dragged through the streets or hung on the public gallows; left out in the open to be devoured by birds of prey.

Eventually, however, more humane attitudes toward suicide were adopted by the churches. Many European countries decriminalized suicide in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, although it remained a felony in England until 1961, and in Ireland until 1993.

Today's professionals involved in the study of suicidal behavior believe that we need to take a new look at society's perception of suicide.

Society has to take a look at these issues. Religious bodies tend to be stabilizing forces in a culture. But it is technology that is dragging that church, kicking and screaming into the twenty-first century," says Robert Gable, professor of psychology at Claremont Graduate School, U.S.A. "I'm not blaming the church. Technology is just way ahead of our philosophies. We only invent philosophies after technology."

So until the church begins discussing suicide openly, with compassion and understanding, the same as it does for people with cancer or any other condition, the issue will continue to be handled by those involved in technology, and they may not have the answers people are looking for.

Rita Robinson is a health/psychology writer who has written 11 books, one entitled *Survivors of Suicide*. She lives in Bear City, California.

Profile/Opinion

Yancey: writing as pilgrimage

... continued from page 15
about the church.

What do you mean by "propaganda"?

"I think evangelicals are a lot better marketers than Jesus was, for example. I look at how Jesus handled the Rich Young Ruler, in fact, all of Jesus' invitations. He makes it as difficult as possible. The three invitations he gave are 'Take up your yoke,' that's no fun, 'To bear our burden,' take up a towel and wash each other's feet, and 'Take up your cross.' None of those are appealing.

"Whereas in America, it's 'God's going to do something good for you,' you know, 'God's going to improve your life,' 'God's going to solve your problems.' Jesus never promised that God's going to solve your problems. In fact, he said 'In my name you'll be thrown into prison, God's going to create your problems.' People who are attracted to the evangelical invitation that this is going to solve your life often end up disillusioned, it doesn't work that way, and they feel burned; that was the propaganda."

Christian life not a game

Yancey continued: "I look at how he handled the Rich Young Ruler. He didn't say, 'Well, let's start with a ten per cent tithe and then we can work up from there — he made it as hard as possible, because Jesus knew this Christian life is not a game. It takes your whole soul. And he didn't want hangers-on, he wanted committed people.

"We in the church tend to twist arms; we try to talk people into something. Jesus never tried to talk them into something, he didn't want to talk anybody into it, and he wanted committed people who were willing to risk their lives for him. So, I think there are a lot of wonderful things about the evangelical movement, but I think, in a lot of ways, they misrepresent what the Christian life is going to be like, and then people end up being disappointed in it."

Your book titles are thoughtful in nature. Do you have to think about what questions to ask, or are you a natural questioner?

"I usually start with the title, frankly. The original title for *What's So Amazing About Grace?*, was 'What's So Amazing About Grace And Why Don't Christians Show More Of It?' The publisher said we're willing for that, but it's a lot of words to put on the spine of a book! And, about half of our books are gift books and it might

be a deterrent to give somebody a book and you're implying why don't Christians show more grace. So we shortened it.

With *Disappointment With God* the publisher originally suggested that's a negative title: Why don't you have something like 'Overcoming Disappointment With God?' And there's that propaganda thing again. I want to reach disappointed people, and we went around and around on *Reaching for the Invisible God*. There are a lot of different words; we tried 'seeking' or 'searching for'. 'Reaching' is a little more active, not just looking around, I'm actually in the process of grasping toward. So, we do put a lot of thought into titles, but it usually comes early on and gets refined later," Yancey said.

Where is God when it hurts?

Do you start with a question, do you have a thesis in mind?

"Where Is God When It Hurts?" came out of experiences I had as a journalist. I would interview a lot of people who had been through tragedy and they would tell me consistently that the church made it worse for them, rather than better. They're just trying to get well, and Christians would come in with these very mixed voices, either saying 'You sinned, God's punishing you,' or 'No, no, it's not God, it's the Devil,' and it didn't seem to me that we should be making it worse, you know, 'The God of all comfort,' is the phrase that Corinthians uses.

"I wrote that book, a lot of people wrote me and said 'Thank you, very helpful, but my problem is not really physical pain. This book is written about physical pain. Mine is more a feeling of betrayal, emotional pain. I've poured my life into my children, now they won't have anything to do with me. You know, it's other issues.' That's really where the book *Disappointment With God* came from. It came from their questions."

'It just doesn't work for me'

"And that's often the way it is. The *Reaching for the Invisible God* book — I also got a lot of letters from readers saying, 'I want to know God, but it just doesn't work for me, I don't even know he's there. How do you have faith? How do you believe?' Good question. So I was trying to pin down for myself how the Christian life does work, or how it's supposed to. I read a lot of books on how it's

Make encounters with women holding church offices

Bert den Boggende

Allow me to use five personal encounters which have contributed to a positive perspective on women in the Bible and on women in church offices.

As a teenager, I developed a habit visiting other churches in town. Most of them were Reformed, but on one occasion I visited the small Lutheran church, and to my surprise the minister was a woman. I did not even know that women pastors existed. I don't recall much of the service, except that initially I had some difficulties getting used to her voice and that after the sermon, I thought that her sermon would have been quite acceptable in my home church, the Gereformeerde Kerk.

Was the service and sermon a blessing to me? Yes, it was, and at that time it was all that counted. I had never thought about women in church offices before, let alone regarding it as a theological or ecclesiastical issue.

The first woman elder

The second encounter was also accidental. A week or so before emigrating to Canada I happened to see a picture of my aunt in the newspaper. The accompanying article dealt with her experience as the first elder in the Gereformeerde Kerk. Unknown to me, she had been an elder for about a year. Again, I don't remember much of the article except that the emphasis was on pastoral care. It was the first time I read something about the issue of women in church office, and the pastoral approach made a lot of sense to me at that time and it still does.

Shortly after arriving in Canada, in 1967, I came to realize that my acceptance of women in church office was regarded as problematic by many CRC members. It seemed wise not to say much about the issue, since I was a teacher at a Christian school and still learning the intricacies of the English language. By the mid-1970s I began pursuing a degree in biblical studies. While the issues of women in the Bible and women in church office did not receive my attention, I obtained some tools to deal with them more adequately than before. These tools were useful when, around 1980, a number of articles about 'headship' appeared in *Christianity Today*. Contrary to Anne VanderHoek's approach (CC, Feb. 19, 2001), the

supposed to work and they don't really reflect my experience, so I'm trying to be honest.

Yancey said his 'sense of peace' comes working hard at 'being balanced' — he exercises, he takes walks, climbs mountains, he skis, he travels. "If I just stayed in a room and did nothing but write I'd go crazy," said Yancey. "I think any writer does. I do work hard at putting myself into a 'preacherly' context. But I'm not sure I am a peaceful person in a lot of ways, with the issues of inequities in the world, the problems of the environment — these are unsolvable

problems and they're just going to get worse. I'm aware of them, but I just have to faithfully tackle whatever is in front of me. I can't tackle the whole world, and I can't solve the world."

'Messenger for the wounded'

Yancey alluded to being a 'messenger for the wounded,' but he doesn't ever just sit down and think, "What does the world need that I can contribute?"

"I think 'What do I need?' period." And my books are an expression of my groping. The

Building
Trust
Vicky Van Andel Ed.



debate took place within the traditional view that the Pastoral letters were written by Paul. It was the first time I encountered the exegetical approach. Even though the articles left me with some unsolved problems, I found the approach profitable.

I struggled with justice

During the 1980s I studied history. On the surface I dealt with such wide-ranging issues as the Reformation, Bishop Strachan and British pacifism. Below the surface I struggled with justice and how human beings have treated each other as God's image bearers. I came to realize that being silent about women in history was not only doing injustice to women, but also producing misleading history. Consequently, I began thinking that some of our cherished mythologies had to be discarded if we wanted to do justice to women.

By the mid-1990s I realized that none of my previous approaches and experiences, the unsophisticated teenager accidentally hearing a woman minister, the pastoral needs, the exegetical explanations, and justice, came to grips with what I have come to regard as the heart of the woman in church office debate, which is: "What is the church?" The church is a foretaste, a reflection, of heaven on earth. Therefore Paul's statement that there is neither male nor female (Gal. 3:28) is relevant for the here and now in terms of the role of men and women in the church.

As my story indicates, there are several different ways to overcome negatives to women in the Bible and to women in church office. For me, my later encounters reinforced my first accidental one. My understanding deepened over four decades. While Reformed theologians have spent much time and energy on the exegetical problems, they have spent less time on the question of what constitutes the church.

The *Christian Courier* has promised some articles on Reformed positions. Why not one on the church?

Bert den Boggende lives in Brooks, Alta.

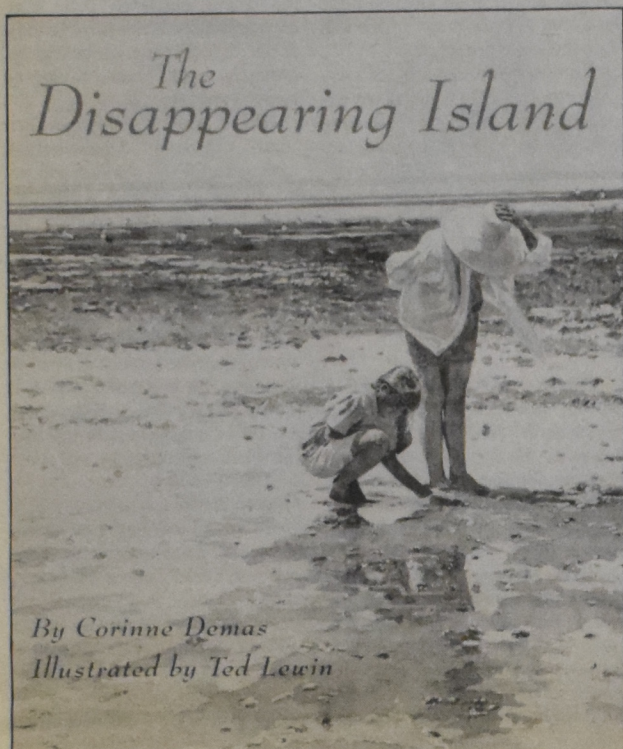
Anyone who would like to contribute to this column is invited to contact Vicky Van Andel via fax at 1-780-473-0970 or email at: vanandel@oanet.com.

'messenger' part comes later. It doesn't come in the process of writing; it comes when I hear from the people who receive that message. I don't know who they are until I hear from them and often they'll guide me towards something new. But I'm really writing for myself rather than for other people."

Michael Ireland is a British freelance journalist in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Mark Ellis is a Senior Correspondent for ASSIST News Service and the Assistant Pastor at Calvary Evangelical Free Church of Laguna Beach, California.

Book Reviews

Summer Fun!



Collected and reviewed by
Jeanette Romkema

It is a great summer for books! Below I offer eight picture books to enjoy around the campfire, outside after a barbecue, in a boat while fishing for dinner, on the beach after a day of fun, or in bed during a sleepover. Have a great summer and don't forget to pack some books!

By the Light of the Captured Moon

Written by Julian Scheer, illustrated by Ronald Himler
New York: Holiday House, 2001.
ISBN 0-8234-1624-0 32pp.
Fiction picture book for elementary – junior grades.

"Each night Stuart and Juny Layne and Mary Frances Bethel walked from nearby farms, bringing their jars to play a game of catch-the-lightning-bug." Young Billy becomes so depressed that all their summer fun will soon end that he decides he will capture the moon. Although pulling it into his room is surprisingly easy, keeping it to use for nighttime fun proves to be more challenging. Award-winning Scheer and Himler combine their talents to create a book full of fun, mystery, and wonder. *By the Light of the Captured Moon* shares a love of summers and the

day at the ocean than through one's five senses: "I taste the ocean and wonder why/ it tastes like tears I sometimes cry....I lick the drops still on my face;/ I love the way the ocean tastes." Rhythmic poetic text and brilliant realistic illustrations meet to create a unique book about summer by the water. The colors used, perspectives chosen, and moments captured are rarely seen in a children's book. A wonderful book to read after a day at the beach.

Let's Go

By Charlotte Dematons
Asheville, NC: Front Street Books, 2001.
ISBN 1-886910-65-0 32pp.
Picture book for ECE – primary grades.

An unexpected journey past pirates, through an enchanted forest, and over a pod of whales when the reader is invited to join an imaginative boy to the store to buy apples. Few words are used; however, through a wealth of visual text a complex story is woven, rich with interesting detail, hidden mysteries to be discovered, and delightfully unexpected characters to meet. Illustrated exclusively from the aerial perspective, this book challenges the viewer to see differently and experience the ordinary in an extraordinary way.

The Biggest Fish in the Lake

Written by Margaret Carney, illustrated by Janet Wilson
Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2001.
ISBN 1-55074-720-7 32pp.
Fiction picture book for elementary – junior grades.

A young girl receives a fishing rod from her grandfather for her birthday and is taken bass fishing. They have spent many hours fishing together through the ice and in the river near their farm but this is their first trip away from home. This heart-warming story is about the thrills of fishing, respect for nature, intergenerational relationships, and growing up. With dramatic watercolor paints and rich language this story touches readers at a profound level. A perfect book to read if you are planning a fishing trip.

Toasting Marshmallows: camping poems

Written by Kristine O'Connell George, illustrated by Kate Kiesler
New York: Clarion Books, 2001.
ISBN 0-618-04597-X 48pp.
Poetry picture book for all ages.

The fun, excitement, and adventure of camping can be experienced through the thirty evocative and humorous poems offered in *Toasting Marshmallows*. From sitting around the campfire, to being stung by mosquitoes, to getting dressed in a sleeping bag, to being caught in a rainstorm, this book offers a rich collection of camping memories. Accompanied with vivid illustrations the language, rhythm and feelings evoked in this book are truly remarkable. Great to read around the campfire, on a forest trail, in a tent, or in the car on the way home from camping!

When We Go Camping

Written by Margriet Ruurs, illustrated by Andrew Kiss
Toronto: Tundra Books, 2001.
ISBN 0-88776-476-2 32pp.
Fiction picture book for ECE – junior grades.

"I love to go camping! When I wake up in our tent, it is still early. My nose is cold and my breath forms a little cloud. / I snuggle into my sleeping bag, then roll over and quietly peek outside. A wonderful world awaits us." And so begins

this wonderful book about camping in northern Canada. Sighting moose, canoeing on the placid lakes with loons singing their morning songs, fishing for dinner, discovering a beaver dam, and collecting wild berries; these are some of the rich experiences shared in this exceptional book. With paintings full of hidden animals to find in a "Where's Waldo" style and every page offering a different footprint to be labeled, this book offers an authentic look at the camping experience.

Where I Live

By Frances Wolfe
Toronto: Tundra, 2001.
ISBN 0-88776-529-7 32pp.
Fiction picture book for ECE – primary grades.

Living on the seashore is both magical and wonderful. "Sunbeams sparkle like diamonds on water and gulls glide on morning breezes, where I live." Using this template to explore what it is like to live by water with the beach as a backyard, readers feel sea urchins with their toes, dream under a blue sky, follow the grooves on a shell with a finger, and fall asleep by the light of a lighthouse. Wolfe's use of perspective, composition, and color is masterful, communicating far beyond the limits of the written text. A warm and inviting book about the summer.

White Water

By Jonathan & Aaron London
New York: Penguin Putnam Books, 2001.
ISBN 0-670-89286-6 32pp.

Fiction picture book for ECE – primary grades.

With excited nervousness a young boy goes on his first rafting trip with his father – seven days of looking for "white water"! He experiences more than he anticipated: community, the splendor of wildlife, and playful exploration of the forces of nature. Kastner's use of highly textured oil painting exposing the movement and excitement of rafting, is both invigorating and inviting. Based on a true story of a magical trip Jonathan London took with his son Aaron.



frustration that holidays don't last forever. A book about hopes, dreams, and realities.

The Disappearing Island

Written by Corinne Demas, illustrated by Ted Lewin
New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2000.
ISBN 0-689-80539-X 32pp.
Fiction picture book for elementary grades and up.

For her ninth birthday Carrie's grandmother takes her to a disappearing island just off Cape Cod. Although there is no more than a sand barge left the stories shared, the objects found, and the time spent leave a powerful message of respect and appreciation for nature. Lewin's stunning watercolor paintings are a feast for the eyes as they are for the soul. A powerful intergenerational story about the environment, change, and the wonders of God's creation.

Hello Ocean

By Pam Munoz Ryan, illustrated by Mark Astrella
Watertown, MA: Talewinds, 2001.
ISBN 0-88106-988-4 32pp.
Fiction picture book for ECE – primary grades.

What better way to describe a

News Comment

Nose for News



Bert Hielema

HAIR TODAY, DYED tomorrow. Dead later? Read on.

I am fortunate. Even at my advanced age, I still have retained most of my hair and that in the original blond color, although my barber tells me that he has spotted some grey matter on top of my head. So no need for me to dye it. Not that I would ever do it, even though in an effort not to look their age men now are increasingly donning rubber gloves and trying not to ruin the bathroom floor with blobs of hair dye goo. Sales of dyes to men have tripled in 1999 and accelerated further in 2000.

Of course, the stuff is easily spotted on our skulls, with the teenagers setting the pace in the choice of outrageous hues, accentuated with, kept in place, I presume, with carpenter's glue. In Japan, where boys seem to want to look like girls, hair dyes (along with eyebrow tweezers) are big business. Hairdressers there have acquired celebrity status: Japanese female students recently rated hairdressing as "the job with the most imaginative appeal". Even old, rusted TV anchor men, such as Dan Rather, now come with colored hair stacked up, resembling a miniature obstacle course.

WHEN I WATCH WOMEN — something I always do — it seems to me that the majority, both in Europe and North America, paint their hair regularly, and this number is supposed to swell as baby boomers head towards the golden years, where, for most, silvery hair is no longer seen as an asset.

Because more and more members of the human race are doing this at home, some lives in the barber trade might be saved. Because there is a risk involved in all this artificial stuff. Just like another fashion accessory, the mobile phone, hair dye comes with a health warning. A recent report in the *International Journal of Cancer* found a link between hair dye and bladder cancer. Says this report: "people using this beautifying agent could double or triple their chances of developing the

disease." In Britain recently a woman died from an allergic reaction after coloring her hair at home. Apparently hairdressers who come in daily contact with the chemicals might be five times more at risk than those who never use them, and the same is true for those who used such coloring monthly for 15 years or more. Reports the *Guardian Weekly*: "The European Commission's scientific committee for cosmetic products has reviewed a study conducted in Los Angeles by a team from the University of Southern California, and concluded the potential risk was of concern."

DYED HAIR IS NO DOUBT a hairy matter, but it is big business. The market for dye is growing at a rate of 10 per cent per year, which makes it the fastest-expanding segment of the \$37 billion US hair-care industry. So Procter and Gamble cast the die and paid \$5 billion (US) in cash to buy Clairol from Bristol-Myers Squibb, a drug maker, who, perhaps, saw a conflict of interest there: first causing the cancer and then selling the vain buyer the drug to cure the disease.

A number of factors are fueling the popularity of dyes. More people than ever are growing older and since age and wisdom no longer seem to have much of a connection, people don't want to look old. Commented the president of Clairol, a fiftyish woman herself: "Being 50 today is not like being 50 ten years ago. Women are fighting aging every step of the way."

I think that having the younger look can much more safely be accomplished with regular exercise, healthy eating habits, adequate sleep, meaningful lives with lots of volunteer work and social activities and brain exercise. TV, of course, is a no-brainer and even an aging agent. In the process, other body ailments are avoided as well.

Dyed hair also has become a fashion statement. In the past, important people would carry a Prada bag or Gucci shoes. It helps that the new dyes are not so fast, so that we now can have green hair to go with that green dress. Red

especially is in. Perhaps artificial red hair — any unnatural color actually — can be considered a 'red herring', which my dictionary defines as: "something intended to divert the attention from the real problem." Could the real problem be that we don't want to see what's really going on in us, our community, our world?

I am sure that all this is no fad. After all, suffering in the name of beauty is an age-long tradition. Just a tip: since you will do it anyway, to water down the dangers, experts recommend drinking a litre of water after dying in order to dilute any peroxide absorbed through the skin.

Maybe our hair is as a symbol of the world at large. Just as our hair is often a make-believe matter, so more and more our entire political and economic situation resembles fakery as well. Our times too come with a warning attached, but few in our slumbering, almost comatose state, are willing to face reality.

A FEW WEEKS AGO WE saw the Big Wigs of this world not only imprisoned in their luxurious Genoa jails, a truly G-Eight-ed affair, ringed by legions of fully armored men, but also trapped in an economic quandary, a quagmire we share with them. If we cut down our consumption, we have a recession; if we don't, we have more environmental disaster. No wonder trying to fit Kyoto into globalization proved impossible for the U.S.A.

One reason our natural world in the Twentieth century has changed so much is because our ecological policies changed so little. America, more than any other nation, is affected by this. It simply can't change its dependence on fuel, because its entire infrastructure is founded on it.

There are today a lot of storm signs on the horizon, also economic, and if these threats converge, we will see the equivalent of a Perfect Economic Storm. Several potential tempests are forming in the world: In South America there is Argentina, where the government has \$130 billion (US) in debt and, unable to pay the interest, borrowed at 15.96 per cent. When we borrow from Peter to pay Paul, at an ever higher cost, the day of bankruptcy isn't far away. Next payment is due in October.

IN JAPAN PEOPLE ARE old-fashioned: they save instead of spend, and, although nature is based on frugality, the world economy is not. If we ever start saving

— and debt is at an all-time high, so eventually we must — we will face the same problem.

Europe's powerhouse, the German economy, for 30 per cent dependent on exports, is weakening fast. And we? Our monetary well-being depends on that mysterious, fickle, capricious, highly irrational entity, going under the name of The Consumer. Thanks to the tanking of IT, Information Technology — witness Nortel's declining fortunes — our economy is sinking too.

HERE IS OUR PLIGHT: IF we buy fewer SUVs, fewer toys, fewer frills, and just limit ourselves to the basics of life, food, shelter, clothing, then our thriving economy, our high living standard, will sag as surely as a leaking balloon.

That balloon is increasingly built of flimsy and 'filmsy' material. For some reason America has become the leading cultural force in the world. We, here, may sour on the amusement circus, and feel uneasy about our fragile economic base, but U.S. television, films, music are the staple diet of the globe's indigenous people, undermining the influence of their own heritage. Satellites, cables, personal stereos, video recorders, CD's and other Entertainment technology have created the arteries through which "Hollywood" is homogenizing global culture. Re-runs of *Dallas*, the *Bill Cosby* show, *I Love Lucy*, are filling the screens everywhere in the world, especially in Latin America, and parts of Asia, where American films and television programs are dominating the airwaves, acting as a sponge to soak up the spare time and energy that in earlier times might well have been devoted to nurturing and instructing children, or participating in political, religious, civic or community activities. Of course, we have 'matured' well beyond that.

The result is two-fold: the disappearance of the rich diversity of communities in the poor part of our planet, and immense cynicism elsewhere, mostly expressed in anarchism.

I SEE THESE RIOTS IN Genoa as a result of our lack of conveying moral standards to our youth. Because of our loss of genuine — love your neighbor and creation — faith (which used to be the cornerstone in Muslim, Hebrew and Christian beliefs), many have become anarchists, expressed in ultra-nationalist political parties, separatist groups, ethnic cleansing

movement and lately their anxieties and insecurities have found a focus in opposing globalization. (Anarchy could mean: having no basis to start from.)

These people expressed their 'faith' through demonstration, both peaceful and warlike, and any expressing of faith is a religious act. They try to counter the Economic Growth religion, which has displaced so many other faith-communities in the world, with their belief that the state be abolished. They sensed that the emerging of the Economic Growth Religion, not WWI and WWII, is the single most important event in the 20th Century, and in the long run much more devastating.

WE ARE COMING FULL circle and re-entering a pre-Babel era, where the new tower of Babel is the American monoculture model, evident in English as the world's language, in music, in car-culture, in Monsanto's, in films, creating a universal religion which reduces humans to one dimension: that of an economic animal.

Monocultures are very vulnerable. Complex systems have lots of internal diversity, have many religions, many cultures, are better equipped to cope with unpleasant surprises and nasty shocks, because they harbor a large treasure of information, have access to adaptive strategies and different avenues of dealing with difficulties. There is a definite reason for the many cultures we have in the world. The reason is that the more differences there are, the greater is the productivity, stability, and resilience.

Globalization is more efficient. But homogenizing our ecosystems, turning forests and prairies into mono-crops of trees and grain, paving wetlands for subdivisions and malls, and replacing our depleted fisheries with aquaculture pens, all this seemingly easier managed man-made world, also can much more readily collapse suddenly and will, perhaps sooner than later. So Globalism needs a monoculture. Its overarching priority is to serve of the God of Economic Growth. That's why the U.S. and Canada cannot adopt Kyoto. And we will keep on dying our hair, in spite of the dangers and keep on burning fuel until we burn more than our fingers.

Bert Hielema can be reached at hielema@attcanada.net

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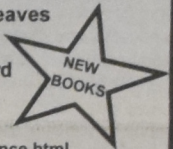
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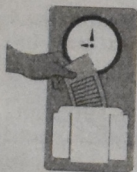
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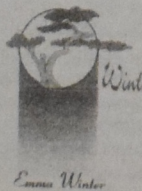
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News

Christians in Laos forced to renounce faith

LAOS (Newsroom) — Authorities in Laos released eight Protestant leaders after using shock treatment to force them to renounce their faith, according to a British human rights monitor. The Christians, from Savannakhet province in southern Laos, were arrested May 31 amid a government campaign to shut down churches, according to Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW).

The men had been accused of anti-government activities and involvement with foreign political movements in order to weaken the government. The Southeast Asian country is ruled by the communist Lao Peoples Revolutionary Party. Some of the Christians, ranging in age from 30 to 60, had been held under such miserable conditions that they were unable to walk.

Unable to bear the strain

The British group said that the men "were unable to bear the strain of their conditions, which for some included being held in stocks and handcuffs, and agreed to renounce their religion." Later, however, they were overcome with remorse

and grief about their decision.

Just before the arrests, authorities gave churches in the district a deadline of June 1 to close down their meetings, CSW said. Jubilee Campaign, a Christian human rights organization based in Guildford, England, said last week it has received information that the central government of Laos has secretly ordered local authorities to close down churches throughout the country, starting in the countryside.

A pattern of repression

The arrest of the eight Protestants continues a pattern of repression consistent with the government's stated aim to rid the country of Christianity, CSW said. In addition to repeated arrests of Paksong church members and their relatives this year, church members have been told at gunpoint to sign forms to abandon their faith. Many also have been threatened with loss of land, livelihood, and medical care.

CSW human rights officer Elisabeth Parker told Newsroom the Lao government is particularly concerned about a growing

evangelical Protestant movement within the Hmong, a minority group that lives mostly in the mountains on both sides of the Laos-Vietnam border. The Pathet Lao Communists, who have ruled since 1975, despise the Hmong for

their alliance with the French colonialists in the 1950s and later with the United States during the Vietnam War.

"There is quite a lot of hostility against the Hmong anyway, and so Christianity, being a so-called

Western religion, is viewed as one more thing to be cautious of," Parker said. "I think they're afraid that Christians will be a channel for a resistance movement."



COURTESY VOICE OF THE MARTYRS

Hmong Christians: the Lao government is particularly concerned about a growing evangelical Protestant movement within the Hmong, who live mostly in the mountains on both sides of the Laos-Vietnam border.

Church communicators urged to support reconciliation

Paul Jeffrey

NOORDWIJKERHOUT, The Netherlands (ENI) — A Dutch government minister warned church journalists from around the world that their work is not "a miracle cure" for a world plagued by poverty and violence.

"Lack of communication can indeed breed misunderstanding and exclusion," acknowledged Eveline Herfkens, minister of development of the Netherlands. Yet, she said, better communication was not "a kind of miracle cure that automatically leads from confrontation to reconciliation."

Speaking on July 4, before the third congress of the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), Herfkens suggested church communicators concern is not preventing conflict. "It's not confrontation we need to avoid, but violence," she said. "Clashes between conflicting interests are perfectly normal, even in stable states ... It would be a very dull

world without them. The challenge for society is to deal with conflict constructively."

Murderous spiral of distrust, disinformation

Herfkens acknowledged that communicators can go too far. "Once societies become caught up in a whirlwind of hate and violence, communication takes on a different guise," she said. "Warring parties also communicate, but the information they provide is often aimed at reinforcing the image of the other as the enemy. This murderous spiral of distrust and disinformation must be broken to give peace a chance."

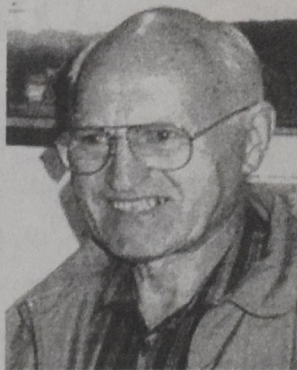
Herfkens was one of several speakers who addressed the opening session of the WACC Congress under the theme "Communication: From Confrontation to Reconciliation". More than 250 communicators from 83 countries attended the conference here, July 4-7.

Founded in 1968, WACC today links alternative media networks, journalists, educators, grass-roots activists and church leaders in 117 countries. Headquartered in London, WACC supports a variety of programs, mostly in the South, aimed at encouraging the development of more democratic media.

Herfkens described the support which the Netherlands provided to journalists in the Third World. She said her government lobbied for freedom of expression, trained journalists and editors, and supported media-related trade unions. Herfkens said such aid was especially directed at "media which give a voice to the poor."

Some of that official aid is given to church-sponsored media. She cited the example of Radio Voice of Hope in Sudan, a station broadcasting to millions of displaced people that was set up last December by the New Sudan Council of Churches.

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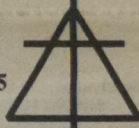
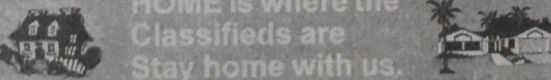
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The cost to set up a personal file under a unique file number is \$35. Ads requesting correspondence with this file are run at \$16 pci per insertion. All correspondence is immediately forwarded unopened. NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS We offer a \$25 one-year subscription to couples whose wedding is announced in <i>Christian Courier</i> and to parents who announce the birth of a child in our paper. Please let us know when placing your ad that you want to take advantage of this offer. SUBMITTING YOUR AD mail: <i>Christian Courier</i> #4 - 261 Martindale Road St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 fax: 905-682-8313 email: ccadpromo@aol.com OTHER INFORMATION a) <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format. And editing style. b) Please provide us with clear copy. <i>Christian Courier</i> is not responsible for any errors due to hand written or phoned-in advertisements.	 <i>Congratulations to John Stegeman on his 85th birthday.</i> Happy 85th Birthday Dad and Opal August 16, 2001 We praise and thank God for eighty five years of faithfulness to John Stegeman Happy birthday and may God continue to bless you with His goodness in the coming years. With love from your family: Ben & Jane Stegeman — St. Catharines, Ont. Anne & Gary Van Eyk — St. Catharines, Ont. Jean Stegeman — Cambridge, Ont. Lambert & Arlene Stegeman — Surrey, B.C. 14 grandchildren, and 7 great-grandchildren. Address: Jan Stegeman, 398 Vine St. Apt 203, St. Catharines, ON L2M 3S2 "Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed are they that put their trust in Him." (Psalm 34:8) With gratitude to the Lord, who has kept him in His care, his wife Wilhelmina, their children and grandchildren are pleased to announce the 76th birthday of Jan Vandergeest on August 17, 2001 We wish him God's abundant blessing. John & Anne Vandergeest — Pembroke, Ont. Sarah, Ruth & Peter Peter Vandergeest & Luin Goldring — Toronto, Ont. Emma & Liora Tony Vandergeest & Alice-Ann Tangelder — Kitchener, Ont. Christian, Brendan & Caleb Martin Vandergeest — St. Thomas, Ont. Willy Vandergeest — Toronto, Ont. Anne & Maurice Velduis — Moorefield, Ont. Jessica, William, Andrew, & Shae-Lynn Correspondence address: Jan Vandergeest, 106 Fairview Ave., St. Thomas, ON N5R 4X6 E-mail: jan@gtm.on.ca	1941 August 5 2001 With joy and gratitude we announce the 60th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents JACK and JENNY HEERINGA (HILBERS) We are thankful for the blessing they have been in our lives and pray that the Lord will continue to keep them in His care. With love from: Jerry & Judy Heeringa — Stoney Creek, Ont. Jonathan & Jennifer, Julie, Jeremy Pauline (1944-1999) & Henry Boer — Louisville, Ky Chris & Dawn, Chantelle, Celina Jackie & Rein Selles — St. Albert, Alta. Suzanne, Alisha, Robert Evelyn & Rod Dengerink — Kleinburg, Ont. Jodi, Danielle, Kari Home address: 303 Central Ave., Unit 18, Grimsby, ON L3M 5L7 Strathroy, Ont. Blyth; Ont. 1961 Aug 25 2001 With thanks to God we announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents ADRIAN and JEAN VAN GEEST (nee VANDER BORGH) May the Lord continue to favour you with health and joy. Jim — Hamilton, Ont. Sally — Abbotsford, B.C. Fred & Susan — Sioux Center, Iowa Annette — Burlington, Ont. On September 16, Dad retires after 38 years of ministry in the Christian Reformed Church. We give thanks to God for his faithfulness to Dad in his ministry to the church. Anniversary Open House: August 25, from 2 - 4:30 p.m. at Blyth CRC. Home address: Box 238 Blyth, ON N0M 1H0 1961 August 4 2001 "I lift up my eyes to the hills — where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth." (Psalm 121:1,2) ISAAC and BONNIE VAN GEEST will celebrate God's faithfulness on the occasion of their 40th anniversary. May God continue to bless you and keep you both in His care. Children: Al & Rita Vandervliet — Chatham Ria & Peter Bulthuis — Grimsby Johanna Jorritsma (Andrew †1999) — Beamsville Cora Matthews — London John & Marg Van Geest — Beamsville Janet & Art Piersma — Beamsville Isaac & Sylvia Van Geest — Grimsby Peter & Judy Van Geest — Grimsby Andrew & Sandra Van Geest — Grimsby 27 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren. We invite you to celebrate with us at an Open House on Saturday, August 4, 2001, D.V. from 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. at Mountainview Christian Reformed Church, 290 Main St. E, Grimsby. Best wishes only. Home address: 303 Central Ave., Unit 27, Grimsby, ON L3M 5L7	"If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord." (Rom. 14:8) On May 27, 1979, she selected this text for her profession of faith. Peacefully, in her 41st year, after a courageous struggle for 25 years with kidney failure, at St. Joseph's Hospital in Hamilton, on July 4, 2001, MINNIE RENKEMA passed away. Beloved daughter of Riet Renkema and Dick Renkema and dear sister of Ed, Bernie and Jacqueline Renkema and her husband Noel DeSouza. Also survived by Lorna Renkema, wife of Dick, many aunts, uncles and cousins, both in the Netherlands and Canada, friends, and a caring church family. A memorial service was held on July 8 at Mountainview Christian Reformed Church, Grimsby, Ont. Correspondence address: Riet Renkema, Box 796, Vineland, ON L0R 2C0	Personal Niagara area. 50 year old widower, sincere Christian, would like to meet sincere Christian lady. Please send letters to: File #2719, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 Church News Christian Reformed Church: Please note that Classis East Canada will meet, D.V., on Oct. 12 & 13, 2001, at the CRC of Williamsburg, Ont., starting at 9:30 a.m. on Friday. During the afternoon of that same day the following 3 candidates will be examined: H. Vanderbeek (Cornwall), P. Vander-kooy (Milford), D. Vroeg (Halifax) and also Ron Kok, who has requested to be examined for the office of evangelist in Orleans, Ontario. All materials for the Classis Meeting must be in the hands of the Stated Clerk by Sept. 3, 2001. James Kooistra, Stated Clerk. Classis Chatham of the Christian Reformed Church in NA. appointed a new stated clerk, effective September 1, 2001. Mr. Jack Herder, 574 Lacroix St., Chatham, ON N7M 2X3 Telephone: 519-354-0054 e-mail: herderj@ciaccess.com
Birth MURRAY JANSSENS: Hielke & Caroline Janssens are excited to tell you about the birth of their first grandchild, a healthy baby boy Devyn Murray Janssens born on June 12, 2001. <i>Psalm 139:13, 15</i> Devyn's parents are Scott & Holly. Also first time grandparents are Don & Gail Murray. Scott & Holly's address is: 175 Wellington St. S, Woodstock, ON N4S 3J2	Bed & Breakfast Margaret's Cosy Hillside Bed & Breakfast. Beautiful country setting overlooking the Conestoga river. Spacious bedrooms, shared and private bathrooms. Hearty breakfast menu. Pre-arranged lunch and dinners. Crafts. Close to Drayton Theatre and St. Jacob's market. Please call 519-638-2817	Anniversaries Wallaceburg, Ont. Aylmer, Ont. 1951 August 17 2001 "Cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you." (1 Peter 5:7) With gratitude to God, we celebrate the gift of fifty years of marriage to our parents DICK and DINA HARTEMINK (nee HEUSINKVELD) May the Lord continue to keep you in His loving care. Henry & Annette (Hooghiem) Hartemink — Aylmer, Ont. Carrie, Denise & Johnathan VanDyk, Katie, Melanie, Richard, Kendrick, Evan Bruce & Tina (Guikema) Hartemink — Aylmer, Ont. Jennessa, Ryan Eric & Evelina (Hooghiem) Hartemink — Belmont, Ont. Karen, Evelyn, Brenda, Cheryl, Deric Gary Hartemink — Aylmer, Ont. Lynda & Pete Eygenraam — Harriston, Ont. Janine, Dianne, Rachel, Gregory Erna Hartemink — Hamilton, Ont. and one great-grandchild, Jeremy. Please join us for an Open House to be held on Friday, August 17, from 2 - 4 and 7 - 9 p.m. at the Christian Reformed Church, 194 South St. W, Aylmer, Ont. Home address: 110 Caverly Rd., Apt. 27, Aylmer, ON N5H 2P4	Teachers PRINCE GEORGE, B.C.: Cedars Christian School has an opening for a part-time position as nursery school teacher. Please send your resume and statement of faith to: Mrs. V. Knibbe, 701 N. Nechako Rd., Prince George, BC V2K 1A2 or fax to 250-564-0729. All interested applicants must possess their Early Childhood Education certificate.	Miscellaneous GRONINGERS: Did you know there is a web-site for you? Check out: dideldom.com
		Home Sweet Classifieds		GIVE SOMEONE A SECOND CHANCE. Please give generously.  THE KIDNEY FOUNDATION OF CANADA

Classifieds

Job Opportunities	Job Opportunity	Retirement
MUTUAL SUPPORT a non-profit agency providing residential foster care for children in the Niagara Peninsula invites applications for the position of: Child Care Worker The successful applicant will possess: related education or experience and proven team ability. This unique live-in commitment has proven itself to be a remarkable change agent in the lives of these children. Please forward your resume to: Randy Klassen Associate Director PO Box 397, Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0 or call 905-892-4332 for more information. IF YOU ARE A COMPASS, we have seventy young people seeking direction. Immanuel CRC of Brampton, Ont., is seeking a YOUTH DIRECTOR dedicated to maintaining and enhancing the existing programs of this well-established youth group. Church and area profiles available upon request. Please send resumes to immanuelyouthdirector@hotmail.com or mail to: Immanuel CRC, 63 Church St. E, Brampton, ON L6V 1G1 Attn: Youth Director Calling Committee. Contact Steve Ryan at 905-453-3645 for more information.	"Employment Opportunity" Skilled Trades <i>Are you a young, energetic individual, just finished school, not sure what to do with your future? Have you considered a skilled trade?</i> We are a Waterdown based industrial contractor requiring personnel for industrial installations. We are looking for a hard working individual, self-starter, with a willingness to learn all areas of our business. Some experience in the following areas: welding/fabrication, mechanical assembly, sheet metal work and process piping would be a definite asset but not essential. Some travel may be required. Fair wage rate and benefit package available to the right individuals. Please fax your resumes to Nyman Bros Ltd. 905-689-0997	Retirement of Pastor Wieger De Jong: The Council of the Clinton CRC wishes to announce the retirement of its pastor, Rev. Wieger De Jong He has served the CRC faithfully since 1969. We wish him, and his wife Coby, God's blessings. On August 26, at 10 a.m., he will be conducting his farewell service.
Licensed or Apprentice Auto Service Technician required for busy repair shop. Apply in person or send resume to: West Lincoln Auto 3049 Reg. Rd. 14 RR 3 Smithville, ON L0R 2A0 Fax: 905-957-5683	Event 50th ANNIVERSARY Exeter Christian Reformed Church, Ontario, will be celebrating its 50th anniversary on September 22 and 23, 2001. Join us Saturday for brunch, Open House, barbeque and evening program or Sunday for our special services. For dinner reservations or more details, call Jennifer Branderhorst 519-235-2990 or e-mail: bulletin@exetercrc.on.ca Travel  1-800-667-2525 TORONTO 416-224-5211 BRADFORD 905-775-6763 E-mail: dcatravel@getar.ca Emergency Service Available Visit us @ www.dca-travel.com ON SALE: KLM, A. C., Canada 3000 ✶ MARTINAIR... DIRECT Ont. Reg. 01495998	Job Opportunities Media Development Minister The Christian Reformed Church in North America is seeking applicants for Media Development Minister for the Back to God Hour, located in suburban Chicago, Illinois. Qualified applicants would have demonstrated analytical skills for research and development in various aspects of media ministry and demonstrated creative abilities to be used in the development of electronic media resources. The successful candidate will be an ordained minister in the Christian Reformed Church or willing to become an ordained minister in the Christian Reformed Church with a minimum of two years related experience. Ability to speak a second language an asset. Some travel is required. A detailed job description is available upon request. For consideration, submit a copy of your resume and a letter stating your interest by September 4, 2001 to: Director of Personal Christian Reformed Church in North America Back To God Hour 6555 W. College Drive Palos Heights, IL 60463 708-371-8700 Fax 708-371-1415 E-mail: colemann@crcna.org 
Miscellaneous AOW EN BEDRIJFSPENSOEN DUTCH RETIREMENT CONSULTING AGENCY ♦ Als U na 1 januari 1957 bent geëmigreerd heeft U mogelijk recht op AOW (pensioen). ♦ Heeft U of Uw partner in Nederland gewerkt, dan heeft U mogelijk recht op Bedrijfspensioen. Wenst U hulp, contact: Dutch Retirement Consulting Agency PO Box 7544 Grand Rapids MI 49510 ...of bel één van de volgende nummers: 616-245-9911 616-531-4046/res.	Wanted Cottage to buy, flexible terms, Muskoka, Haliburton area, lakefront only, any condition, private sale, accessible by road year round, call 1-866-830-1409.  EPILEPSY CANADA 1-514-845-7855 1-877-SEIZURE www.epilepsy.ca  HOME is where the Classifieds are Stay home with us. PICTURE THIS!  You can advertise in Christian Courier's Business and Service Directory once a month for only: \$25.00 + GST  Promote your business to thousands of readers across Canada.	 Edmonton Society for Christian Education is inviting applications for EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR The successful candidate will provide leadership to a dynamic organization dedicated to providing Christian education. The Executive Director provides leadership to the Society in the areas of development, public relations, finances and facilities management and works closely with the school principal in making Christian education happen. Edmonton Christian School has 1,000 students and is presently planning a \$5 million facilities enhancement project. The School is supported by 1,500 dedicated Society members. Commitment to the mission and vision of Edmonton Christian School and excellent organizational/communication skills are required. Experience in management is a definite asset. A complete position description is available by contacting the Administration Office (780) 476-6281. Salary is negotiable. Application deadline is August 15, 2001. Please direct resumes or inquiries to: Roy Schouten, Board Chair Edmonton Society for Christian Education 14304 - 109 Avenue Edmonton, AB T5N 1H6 Phone: (780) 476-6281 Fax: (780) 454-0793

AUGUST 6, 2001

Events/Advertising

Calendar of Events

Items appearing in this column are run free of charge if they advertise an admission-free event, if they accompany an ad for the same event, or at the discretion of CC. In case of free listing, space limitations apply. The charge otherwise is \$7.50 per line, or \$1.50 per 1/3 line, per insertion.

- Aug. 14-16 "Retreat and Equip" Summer Education Conference at Redeemer Univ. Coll. Ancaster, Ont. Lecturer: Dr. David Holwerda, "The Apocalypse". Info. Rev. A. Beunk: 905-643-4340; fax: 905-643-4199
- Aug. 26 Dutch Service, Ancaster CRC, 70 Garner Rd. E (Hwy 53) Ancaster, Ont. Rev. R. Kooops preaching.
- Sept. 8 Pynakker reunion, at the Dutch Mill, Millgrove Rd, Waterdown, Ont. Starting 10 a.m. Call 905-689-1588
- Sept. 14-16 First CRC Brandon, Man., 50th anniversary. Call 204-727-4652 or 204-725-1445.
- Sept. 22-23 Exeter Chr. Reformed Church, Exeter, Ont. 50th anniversary. For info. call 519-235-2990
- Sept. 22-23 Hope CRC, Brantford, Ont. 50th anniversary celebration. For info. call 519-759-7581 or 519-753-5543
- Sept. 28 Liberation Choir Concert: Owen Sound, Ont. 8 p.m. Division United Church. See ad in this issue.
- Sept. 29 Liberation Choir, Bowmanville, Ont. 8 p.m. Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church. See ad in this issue.
- Sept. 29-30 Covenant CRC, St. Catharines, Ont. 25th anniversary celebration. Saturday 7:30 p.m. Sunday 10 a.m.
- Oct. 20 Liberation Choir, Hamilton, Ont. 8 p.m., Christ's Church Cathedral. See ad in this issue.
- Nov. 2 Christian Festival Concert, direction Leendert Kooij, Roy Thomson Hall, Toronto. Call 416-636-9779
- Nov. 23 Liberation Choir, Orangeville, Ont. 8 p.m., Orangeville Can. Ref. Church. (Correct location) See ad.
- Nov. 24 Liberation Choir, London, Ont. 8 p.m., St. Paul's Cathedral. See ad in this issue.

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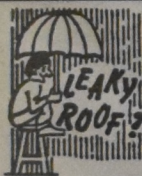
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Saturday, September 29, 2001 at 8:00 p.m. Maranatha Chr. Reformed Church 2805 Hwy. #2 East, BOWMANVILLE, ONT.

Saturday, October 20, 2001 at 8:00 p.m. Christ's Church Cathedral 252 James Street North, HAMILTON, ONT.

Friday, November 23, 2001 at 8:00 p.m. Orangeville Can. Reformed Church 55 C - Line, ORANGEVILLE, ONT.

Saturday, November 24, 2001 at 8:00 p.m. St. Paul's Cathedral 472 Richmond Street, LONDON, ONT.

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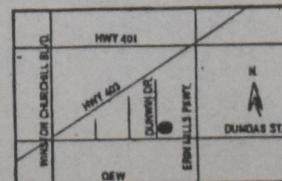
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News

Vandezande starts new, challenging work

Alan Doerksen

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Ben Vandezande, Executive Director of Diaconal Ministries in Eastern Canada, is moving on to a new challenge in September as regional director for new church developments in central and eastern Canada.

Vandezande describes his current work with Diaconal Ministries as "the most enjoyable work I ever had," and says, "I had the choice between two wonderful opportunities" — staying with his previous work or moving on to the new position.

Helping churches plant new churches

Looking at his new work, Vandezande says, "The primary focus of it will be on helping churches plant new churches." He will be "walking along beside a church, helping to identify new church planters," being supportive and "coaching" churches. This will be the major part of his new position.

"The second piece is to provide support for folks involved in campus ministry," he says. "These are full-time people doing marvellous work on campus." Vandezande will assist campus ministry director Rev. Willis Van Groningen,

who is starting campus ministries.

A third aspect of the work will be developing collaborative efforts among the various Christian Reformed agencies based at the Burlington, Ont., office — such as Diaconal Ministries and the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee — so that they will "not be competing with each other."

Travel will be one aspect of Vandezande's new job that he is used to from his diaconal work. This is important so that he can have an "in-person connection" with local churches and campus ministries. Vandezande's "territory" will be from Manitoba to the East Coast.

Some similarities

Vandezande sees other similarities with his previous work. "One key similarity is in both cases, the question is how we can best serve the local church in its ministry," he notes. Another is recruiting and equipping leaders to do church work.

"The idea of starting ministries is a carryover," he says. "Starting up is something I've been involved with directly" — with Operation Manna projects, for instance. Operation Manna is funded by offerings collected annually at Christian Reformed Churches. The

funds are given to established programs (such as soup kitchens) to meet people's practical needs, and sometimes are used to initiate new such projects.

Vandezande believes one of his significant accomplishments with Diaconal Ministries was helping churches to start more than 50 projects in Canada. "We've been able, by God's grace," to recruit, coach and mentor a significant number of church leaders, he says. This can have an ongoing effect, because of what he calls "the multiplication factor" — in which leaders can train other leaders.

"We've been able to provide both resources and people to do basic training of deacons, so every deacon has the resources he or she needs to do their care in the community. We've been able to develop a network of people who can deliver [this] at the door."

Coast-to-coast ministry

Vandezande is also glad to see how Diaconal Ministries has developed from the "All-Ontario Diaconal Conference" into what is now a coast-to-coast Canadian ministry, as of July 1.

Rev. John Van Til has been

CRC Home Missions' regional director for central and eastern Canada for the past 25 years, and is retiring in August. But Vandezande's new responsibilities will be somewhat different. "The position has evolved over the 25 years [Van Til] was in it," says Vandezande. "My role is much more primarily focused on new church development. Henry Wildeboer will be focussing on established church development." Wildeboer is now director of established church development for central and eastern Canada.

Vandezande is looking forward to the challenges of his new work. "I'm really excited because we're at a stage in the Christian Reformed Church where we really want to reach our communities for Jesus Christ. Starting new ministries is one powerful way to reach people. There's a yearning of the Christian Reformed Church to connect to the community, and a yearning in culture for spiritual meaning." Vandezande wants to help churches "translate good intentions into actions" — in regard to connecting with their communities.

News Digest

Dog goes to church

SOBRADO, Portugal — Unlike many humans, Preta the dog goes to church each Sunday — and even walks 25 km to get there. Every Sunday for the last three years, the pooch has headed out of her owner's home in the northern Portuguese town of Sobrado at 5 a.m., *Correio da Manha* newspaper reports.

A former stray, Preta — Portuguese for "black" — walks alone to a church in neighboring Ermesinde to take her usual place next to the altar in time for 7:30 a.m. mass. Whenever worshippers stand up or sit down, Preta does the same. Once mass is over, she usually walks back home. Sometimes Preta will return in a car — but only with a human she knows. The church's congregation has grown, as many people come to see Preta.

Christian skywriter

BOCA RATON, Fla. (Catholic News Service) — Because many people live busy and hectic lives they often forget about God and the many blessings that he has bestowed on them, according to Jerry Stevens, a member of St. Jude Parish in Boca Raton, Florida. To help people think about God more often, the veteran pilot decided to take up skywriting and put messages of hope and inspiration in the skies over south Florida.

Stevens, 58, adds a special oil to his plane's exhaust system to make the mile-long letters of inspiration, 9,000-12,000 feet above the ground. He said he keeps his messages short and sweet because they can dissipate quickly in the wind. Among them are "God is Great," "God Loves U" and "Jesus Loves U," the latter two with smiley-face icons. At Thanksgiving he writes, "Thank God," and at Easter, "He is Risen."

Party robot

TORONTO — NEC Corporation has developed a robot called PaPeRo (short for partner-type personal robot) that could become a hit at parties. The robot "looks for human company, calls out one's name, makes small talk, dances, tells riddles, and sings a song with natural facial expression on the eyes (serving as cameras) and the mouth (light-emitting diodes)," reports *New Materials Japan*, as quoted by the *Globe and Mail*. The robot can recognize as many as 10 people by their voices, and also detect them visually. It can recognize 650 phrases and speaks 3,000.

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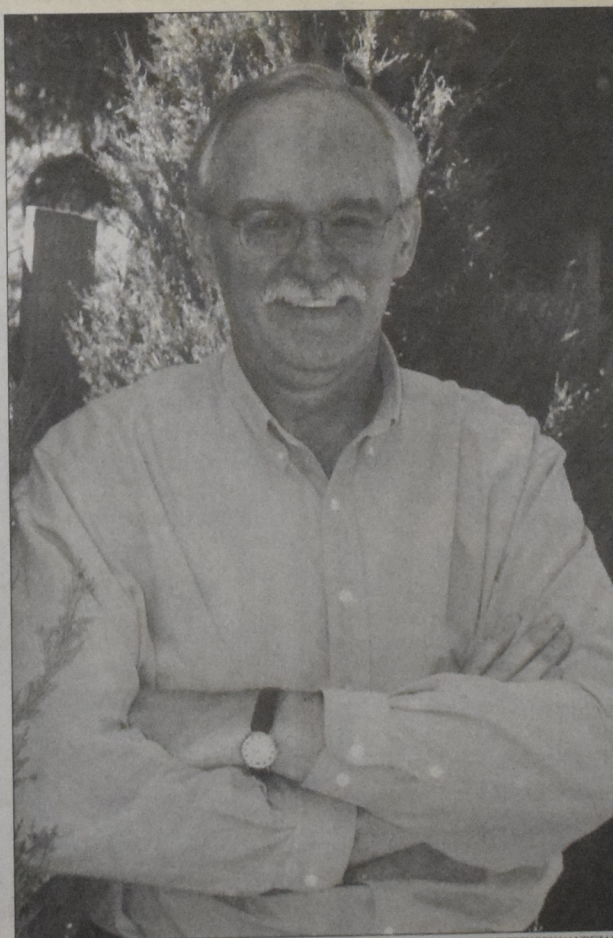
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Ben Vandezande: moving on to a new challenge.

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